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The Defeat of Russia and the Revolutionary Crisis

By N. LENIN

The New Party Line

R. P. DUTT, J. R. CAMPBELL,
J. T. MURPHY, J. STRAIN &
others

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THE OUTLOOK

IN the calendar of the revolutionary workers January is an unforgettable month, crammed with history. On the 9th of January, 1905, the whole world was staggered by the news of the blood-bath administered to the workers of St. Petersburg on the orders of Nicholas II., Tsar of Russia. It was answered by a revolutionary upheaval throughout the Russian Empire which was the forerunner of the triumphant October revolution of 1917. On January 15th, 1919, the social-democratic Government of Germany beheaded the rising proletarian revolution in Germany by the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. On January 22nd, 1924, Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin, the world's greatest leader of the forces of social revolution in the epoch of war and revolution, died. Whatever new events life may yet bring, these will remain firmly established in the history of the world revolution, unforgettable.

To the workers and peasants of the First Workers' Republics the revolution of 1905 and the crime of 1919 are landmarks in the history of events culminating in the triumph of October, 1917. To us of the countries which have yet to achieve the proletarian revolution, they are more than landmarks, they are events which throw a flood of light upon lessons yet to be learned in our march to our October.

* * * * *

The 1905 revolution was the first great proletarian upheaval after the Paris Commune of 1870. A comparison of these two events reveals a tremendous advance in the understanding of the prerequisites of the revolutionary triumph of the proletariat, but still incomplete. The glory of the Paris Commune lies in the fact that the workers of Paris demonstrated in deeds before the eyes

of the whole world what hitherto had been a question of theory, viz., that the proletariat cannot lay hold of the bourgeois State apparatus and use it for its own ends, but must destroy it and create its own State organs of proletarian dictatorship. They revealed the new State form in embryo. The weaknesses of the Commune lay in the lack of a revolutionary workers' party, the consequent lack of decisiveness in its leadership, in military weakness, in the keeping of the revolution within too narrow limits.

The 1905 revolution saw the working-class advance with more certain strides. "Bloody Sunday" reverbrated from one end of Russia to the other. It laid the basis of a nation-wide crisis. The workers had a revolutionary party, but as yet in its infancy. 1905 produced the Workers' and Peasants' Soviets as the new State organ of the revolution, and reproduced the Commune in clearer, more definite form. But it had not seized upon the army. The revolution was crushed by this central weakness. Thus in blood and tears the 1905 revolution wrote across the pages of history the Bolshevik teaching that unless the crisis extends to the armed forces of the ruling class, and the revolutionary solidarity of the soldiers and sailors with the workers is definitely prepared, there can be no triumphant October. To miss this lesson of 1905 is to forget the lesson which the Russian workers learned and to leave the workers of to-day helpless before the war dangers which threaten increasingly from every side.

* * * * *

No less decisive and significant are the events of 1919 when Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered. Indeed, it was because these comrades had learned the lessons of 1905, and were translating them into deeds in the war of 1914-18 that they were recognised as the most potent and dangerous enemies of capitalism in Germany, and were murdered by the social-democrats. Throughout the war they scorned the social-patriotism of the socialists who had harnessed the proletariat to the war machine, brushed aside the legalities, and appealed direct to workers and soldiers alike with their message of revolutionary solidarity of the workers and soldiers of all lands against the war and for its transformation into civil war. Civil war came. The Kaiser was deposed. The workers and soldiers were on the streets. Everything cried aloud for the revolution to advance to its October. There was a nation-wide crisis. The ruling classes were unable to govern. The workers, soldiers and sailors were together, arms in hand. But one thing was lacking—there was no Communist

Party, no party of the proletarian revolution. There was only a great Labour Party, and at its tail-end a little band of Spartacists led by Liebknecht and Luxemburg. Here were only the beginnings of the Communist Party, which under the pressure of events and the leadership of these two comrades, might rapidly develop into a mighty party. Here is the reason of the murder. Here is the role of a Labour Party in the hour of crisis.

Nothing in history is more clear than this—without a powerful Communist Party there can be no proletarian revolution, no October triumph. The capitalist class know this. The Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy know this. It is because they know it that as the crisis of capitalism becomes more and more acute and the war ever more certain, they intensify their anti-Communist drive, make more difficult the rapid growth of the Communist Parties. Precisely because these things are true it becomes ever more necessary to break with Labour Party traditions and set our Party on the path of independence and direct leadership of the masses.

* * * * *

It is because Lenin embodied within himself all the lessons of the revolutionary history of the working class and knew how to translate them into the life of his age, that he ranks amongst the immortals as the greatest workers' leader of history. He forged the Russian Communist Party that led the first triumphant revolution of the proletariat. He laid the foundation of the Communist International which is the organised expression of Marxist and Leninist teaching, embodying the lessons and experience of proletarian revolutionary history.

* * * * *

The appropriateness of the anniversary days of January in the present period of struggle cannot be over-emphasised. So open and self-revealing are the capitalist themselves as to the growing war danger that no one to-day ventures to question it. Even the blind bats of the General Council who a short time ago asked that proof be given, are silent, and MacDonald declares that the history of the years just prior to the war are being re-written.

Equally obvious is the role of social-democracy. They are not entirely re-writing pre-war history. Prior to the war the voice of warning was raised in the ranks of reformism. Voices were heard calling loudly to prepare resistance, however uncertain they may have been in propounding the ways and means of

combatting war. The collapse of the Second International in the face of war we all know. But more astounding still in the situation of to-day is the fact that reformism is consciously aiding and abetting, nay more, is in open alliance with imperialism preparing for war. Never was the declaration that the "reformists are the final bulwark of capitalism" more true than to-day.

The fight against the war danger is undoubtedly the central question of the day. In combatting the war danger no task is more imperative, therefore, than the war on social-democracy. Social-democracy for us is embodied in the Labour Party and the trade union bureaucracy. There is not a single feature of the struggle against the on-coming war but will involve us in the fiercest fight with these forces. We cannot fight the war danger unless we bring the message of class war to the workers of the factories and army and navy alike. Can we imagine that our Party will receive assistance from any Labour Party and trade union leaders? Their treatment of the Glading case is our answer.

We cannot combat war without supporting every colonial struggle for independence. Can we count on any support from the social-democratic sources we have named? The bombing of the Arabs, the Simon Commission, the Bengal ordinances, the intervention in China is our answer.

We cannot combat war without leading a struggle against capitalist rationalisation and all it means in terms of wage reductions, lengthening of the hours of labour, speeding up, unemployment. Can we expect aid from "Labouralism"? The betrayal of the General Strike, the isolation of the miners, the acceptance of Mondism is our answer.

To combat the war danger and to prepare the workers for the transformation of imperialist war into a war on capitalism cannot be done without the fiercest fighting against the Labour Party and the trade union bureaucracy. This is obvious from the revolutionary events we have examined and from the facts of our own experience. It is the principal task before our Party in the present period.

HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED ARTICLE BY LENIN

The Defeat of Russia and the Revolutionary Crisis

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The article by Lenin printed below was published for the first time in the "Pravda" of November 7th, 1928. It was written in Berne, Switzerland, at the beginning of October, 1925, under the influence of news from Russia concerning the intensification of the revolutionary movement.

The immediate incentive to the writing of this article was apparently a leaflet published by the Menshevik Secretariat abroad, entitled "War and the Revolutionary Crisis in Russia." This article of Lenin's was not actually printed in any Russian publication abroad, although an article by G. Zinoviev on similar lines to Lenin's manuscript appeared in the "Social Democrat" on October 11th, 1915.

This article by Lenin is presented to readers of the "Communist Review" for the first time in England immediately after its first publication in Russia by the Lenin Institute. It is of great importance as it shows that Lenin already in 1915 perceived in the Russian revolution adequate internal forces *not only for the seizure of power by the proletariat, but also for the building up of socialism. It is also one of the most brilliant examples of Lenin's Marxist dialectic analysis.*

THE dissolution of the Fourth Duma as a reply to the formation within it of an opposition bloc composed of Liberals, Octobrists and Nationalists, is one of the most outstanding features of the revolutionary crisis in Russia. The defeat of the army of the Tsarist monarchy; the growth of the strike and revolutionary movement among the workers; ferment among the broad masses; a Liberal-Octobrist bloc for compromise with the Tsar on a programme of reforms and the mobilisation of industry for victory over Germany—such is the continuity and connection of events at the end of the first year of war.

Everyone sees now that Russia is faced with a revolutionary crisis. But not everybody correctly understands its significance and the tasks of the proletariat arising from it.

History seems to be repeating itself. Again there is war—as in 1905; and it is also a war into which Tsarism has dragged the country for the sake of definitely open, aggressive, predatory and reactionary objects. Once more there is defeat in the war, and the revolutionary crisis is accelerated by it. Once more the Liberal bourgeoisie—this time together even with the widest circles of the Conservative bourgeoisie and landowners—puts forward a programme of reforms and compromise with the Tsar. It is almost the same as in the summer of 1905, prior to the Boulygin Duma, or in the summer of 1906, after the dissolution of the First Duma.

In actuality, however, the great difference is that now the war has gripped the whole of Europe, all the leading countries with a powerful mass socialist movement. The imperialist war has *linked up* the revolutionary crisis (a crisis based on the bourgeois-democratic revolution) with the growing crisis of the proletarian, socialist revolution in the West. This linking up is so direct that no separate solution of the revolutionary problems in one country or another is possible. The bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia is now not merely the prologue to, but an irrefrangible component part of the socialist revolution in the West.

The task of the proletariat as it presented itself in 1905 was to carry out the bourgeois revolution in Russia to the finish in order to ignite the proletarian revolution in the West. In 1915 the second half of this task has become so essential that it is awaiting accomplishment simultaneously with the first. A new political demarcation has arisen in Russia, based on new, higher grade, more developed and more complex international relations. This is a new dividing line between the revolutionary-patriots who want a revolution for victory over Germany, and the proletarian revolutionaries, the internationalists, who want a revolution in Russia *for* the proletarian revolution in the West, as well as *with* it. In point of fact, this new demarcation is a division between the petty-bourgeoisie (urban and rural) in Russia and the socialist proletariat. This new division must be clearly grasped, for the prime task of a Marxist, *i.e.*, of any class-conscious socialist, in face of the approaching revolution is to get a clear understanding of the position of the *various classes* and to connect up differences of tactic and principle in general with the differences in the position of the various classes.

There is nothing more vile, more despicable and more harmful than the idea in vogue among the pseudo-revolutionaries: to "forget" differences "on the occasion" of the more immediate common task of the oncoming revolution. Whoever has not been convinced of the stupidity of this idea by the experience of the ten years' period 1905-1914 is hopeless from the revolutionary point of view. Whoever confines himself now to revolutionary declarations without making an analysis as to which classes *have proved* they can follow, and are following, such-and-such a revolutionary programme—such a person is in substance not to be distinguished from "revolutionaries" like Khrustalev or Alexinsky.

We are confronted with the clear position of the monarchy and the feudal-landowners—not to "hand over" Russia to the Liberal bourgeois—they would sooner make a deal with the German monarchy. Equally clear is the position of the Liberal bourgeoisie—to take advantage of the defeat and of the growing revolution in order to obtain from the intimidated monarchy concessions and a division of power with the bourgeoisie. No less clear is the position of the revolutionary proletariat, striving to carry on the revolution to a finish, taking advantage of the vacillations and difficulties of the bourgeoisie. But the petty-bourgeoisie, in other words, that tremendous mass of the population of Russia only just awakening, is marching gropingly, "blindly," at the tail of the bourgeoisie, a captive of nationalistic prejudices. On the one hand, they are urged forward to the revolution by the unprecedented horrors and disasters of the war, the high cost of living, the ruin, poverty and starvation: on the other hand, at each step they look *back*, to the idea of defending the fatherland, or to the idea of the national entity of Russia, or else to the small-peasant idea of well-being thanks to the victory of Tsarism over Germany, without a victory over capitalism.

These vacillations of the petty-bourgeoisie, of the small peasantry are not by chance, but the inevitable result of their economic position. It is no use hiding from this "bitter" but profound truth; it must be understood and followed up in the existing *political tendencies and groupings* in order not to deceive ourselves and the people, in order not to weaken and not to render impotent the revolutionary party of the social-democratic proletariat. The proletariat will become devoid of force if it allows its Party to hesitate as the petty-bourgeoisie hesitates. The proletariat will only fulfil its task if it is able to march forward towards its great objects without wavering—urging on the petty-bourgeoisie, making it learn from its errors when it swings to the right, utilis-

ing all its forces for the attack when the realities of life impel it to the left.

The "Trudoviki," the "S.R.'s" and the Menshevik-liquidators are the political tendencies in Russia that have come out in full relief during the last ten years, that have proved their connection with the various groups, elements and strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, and have disclosed their vacillation from an extreme revolutionary position in words to an alliance with the chauvinist "People's Socialists" in deeds. As an example, on September 3rd, 1915, the Foreign Secretariat of the (Menshevik) Organisational Committee issued a manifesto on the tasks of the proletariat, in which not a word is said about opportunism and social-patriotism, but they talk about "insurrection" behind the lines of the German army (this is after a year's fight with the slogan for civil war!), while they also proclaim the slogan of "a Constituent Assembly for the liquidation of the war and the liquidation of the autocracy"—a slogan praised so much by the Cadets (Constitutional-Democrats) in 1905! Whoever does not understand that in the interests of a successful revolution the Party of the proletariat must be completely separated from these petty-bourgeois tendencies, bears the name of social-democrat in vain.

Russia is faced with a revolutionary crisis accelerated precisely by the defeat; and it is this that the multifarious opponents of "defeatism" are afraid of recognising. In face of this crisis the task of the proletariat, as before, will be to combat opportunism and chauvinism; otherwise it will be impossible to develop the revolutionary consciousness of the masses and to help their movement by means of unambiguous revolutionary slogans. Not a Constituent Assembly, but the overthrow of the monarchy, a republic, confiscation of the landowners' estates, an eight-hour working day—such, as before, will be the slogans of the social-democratic proletariat, the slogans of our Party. And inviolably linked up with this, our Party, as before, will put forward the slogan of turning the imperialist war into a civil war, *i.e.*, the slogan of the socialist revolution in the West. This is the more necessary so that in its actions, its propaganda and agitation, in all working-class activities our Party will separate and oppose the aims of socialism to the aims of bourgeois (including Plekhanov's and Kautsky's) chauvinism.

The lessons of the war make even our opponents recognise in practice both the position of "defeatism," as also the necessity of putting forward (first as a catchy phrase in manifestos, and afterwards in a more serious and well-thought-out manner) the

slogan for "insurrection in the rear" of the German militarists, *i.e.*, the slogan of civil war. It would seem that the lessons of the war are driving home just what we advocated since its very commencement. The defeat of Russia has *proved itself* the least of evils for it has brought on a revolutionary crisis on a tremendous scale, it has stirred millions—tens and hundreds of millions. And a revolutionary crisis in Russia during an imperialist war is bound to move one's thoughts to the idea of the sole way of saving the peoples, the idea of an "insurrection in the rear" of the German army, *i.e.*, the idea of civil war in all the belligerent countries.

Life itself teaches us. Life itself *is proceeding* through the defeat of Russia to a revolution in the country, and through this revolution, in connection with it, to civil war in Europe. This is the course that actual life has taken. And the party of the Russian revolutionary workers, gathering new force from the lessons that have justified this course, will march forward with still greater energy along the path it has traced out.

(Translated specially for the "Communist Review" by

ERIC VERNEY)

"Bloody Sunday"

By W. JOSS

SUNDAY, January 9th, 1905, marked the beginning of the first Russian revolution—the "dress rehearsal" of 1917. The war with Japan, commenced by Tsarism with the intention firstly of procuring the rich regions of Manchuria and Korea for the Russian trading industrial bourgeoisie and dealers of the Tsar's palace, and secondly which was intended to drown the rising revolutionary movement in a wave of chauvinism evoked by a victorious war, only succeeded in disintegrating the autocratic order. The army suffered a number of general defeats, while the navy lost two squadrons within a few months. The fall of Port Arthur, the most important Tsarist fortress in the Far East, at the end of December, was the last link in these defeats. The significance of the fall of Port Arthur was strikingly characterised by Lenin in the following phrase: "The capitulation of Port Arthur is the beginning of the capitulation of Tsarism." Two or three weeks later came "Bloody Sunday."

January 9th arose directly from a movement that goes down into history as the "Gapon movement." The secret police department, in its endeavour to paralyse the revolutionary movement of the working class, formed early in 1904 a special union meeting of Russian factory workers in St. Petersburg (Leningrad) with the aid of its agent, the priest Father Gapon. The object of this organisation is clearly illustrated in its constitution: "(1) a sober and reasonable instruction of members during their spare time, which will be of real advantage to them both spiritually, morally and materially; (2) the instilling and fortifying of the spirit of Russian nationalism among the members." But the class struggle has its laws unperceived by the gendarmes. The Petersburg workers entered this union in masses. It was the only primitive form of workers' union that existed and soon compelled the leaders of this union to stand at the head of the economic struggle. The turning point came when a conflict broke out at the Putilov works where three workers who were members of the Gapon union were sacked on account of a row with the foreman. This conflict brought all the workers of Petersburg to their feet, and became the central question at the meetings of the Gapon union. The un-

yielding attitude of the Putilov management, headed by Smirnov, which led to a strike at the factory, caused unprecedented excitement among the rank-and-file workers. In such a tense atmosphere Gapon's appeal to go to the Tsar with a petition called forth great enthusiasm among the workers. The spirit of naive belief that the Tsar's officials were robbing the people without his knowledge ran like a red thread through the famous petition which the Petersburg workers took to the Winter Palace on January 9th. Space only permits us to reproduce the most characteristic parts:

> "SIRE,
>
> We, workers and inhabitants of St. Petersburg of various classes, our wives and children and helpless aged relatives, have come to you, Sire, to *seek the truth and your protection*. . . . Here we seek our last salvation. Do not refuse help to your people. Deliver them from the depths of injustice, poverty and ignorance; give them the possibility of deciding their own destiny.
>
> *"Free them from the insufferable yoke of the officials.* Break down the wall that stands between you and your people, and let them rule the country together with you. You stand for the happiness of the people, but the officials are trying to snatch this happiness from our hands. Give orders and promise to execute our demands, and make Russia happy and glorious, and your name will be imprinted on our hearts and on the hearts of our sons for all eternity. If you do not so ordain, if you do not accede to our prayer, we will die here on this square before your palace. We have nowhere else to go and nothing to go for. We have only two paths—either to freedom and happiness or to the grave. We do not regret the sacrifice, we will willingly make it."

The last words reflected the real mood of the masses. All the leaflets of the Petersburg Committee of the Bolsheviks could not prevent this terrible experience of the workers—the procession to the Tsar's Winter Palace. Despite the fact that this demonstration of tens of thousands of workers was met by large patrols from the very commencement, it proceeded without stopping, carrying standards and portraits of the Tsar, and singing religious hymns, sanctifying his name. In another hour the streets of Petersburg were stained with the blood of the workers.

After the Massacre

It is difficult to describe the revolution in thought caused by "Bloody Sunday." One of Gapon's close collaborators writes, for instance, that "when the latter's supporters returned they were convinced that an end had come to the Tsar and God. Old men who were formerly believers stamped on the portraits of the Tsar and ikons, and those who stamped and spat with the greatest gusto were they who formerly used to see that lamps were permanently burning before the ikons, and that they were always kept filled with oil."

On January 9th Gapon also underwent a temporary change. "We have no longer a Tsar. Rivers of blood have separated the Tsar from the people. Long live the struggle for freedom." These words of Gapon millions of workers were now echoing. January 9th caused the first wave of strike protests. During the month there was hardly one large workers' district where the proletariat did not organise mass strikes of class solidarity. The following months represented the stormy period of the people's movement. *The revolution grew more extensive and deeper.*

Those who had commenced the revolution in Petersburg went to the provinces, to the border countries, and brought millions of workers, employees and artisans out on to the street. They penetrated the countryside, aroused the peasantry and led them to smash up the landowners' estates. The working class of Russia gave proof of miracles of energy, self-denial, heroism, patience and self-restraint. During 1905 there were eleven times more strikes than during the preceding ten years. Political strikes were interwoven with economic strikes: side by side with the demand for the eight-hour day and wage increases, the strike slogans called for a republic and the arming of the people. The following episodes of the first revolutionary wave are of particular importance.

The strike of the Ivanovo-Voznessensk textile workers which lasted for more than a month and a half, was led by a specially elected delegate council. This strike was of tremendous revolutionary significance, having aroused the textile workers of the entire central industrial region to the struggle.

Mass strikes took place in Poland, which, in Lodz, one of the main working-class centres, led to a barricade struggle, and succeeded in rallying together the proletariat of various nationalities. Disturbances arose in Odessa, where the strike ended in a bloody collision with the police as a result of their provocative conduct. The events in Odessa should be noted, particularly in

view of the fact that they directly proceeded the first rising of the Black Sea sailors on the famous warship, the "Potemkin." The sailors, who were the most conscious and proletarian section of the navy in this revolutionary movement, had all the more reason of rebelling against Tsarist orders owing to the severe discipline enforced by aristocratic officers. The revolt on the "Potemkin" took on a very serious character: a section of the ship's command were thrown into the sea, and new commanders elected from among the sailors.

The October strike (1905) was the climax in the rise of the revolutionary wave. There was not a town, not a large factory, which did not stop working and demand the overthrow of autocracy.

> "The strike was not restricted to the railways. It was striving to become a general strike. Having let off steam and put out the station lights, the strikers, with a crowd of railway workers, went into the town, held up the tramways, izvostchik horses and turned the passengers out, closed shops, restaurants, cafés and inns, and confidently approached the doors of the factories. There they were already awaited. Alarm whistles were given, work ceased and the crowd in the street at once begins to grow. It proceeds further and already carries the Red Flag. The banners proclaim that the crowd desires the Constituent Assembly and a republic, that it is fighting for socialism." —(Trotsky, "1905.")

The October strike gave birth to a new type of organisation in the history of the Labour movement—the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, after which sprang up the Soviets of Soldiers' Deputies and Peasants' Committees. The first of these Soviets was the Petersburg Soviet, which in a few days was the acknowledged leader of the masses of the people.

This manifesto was approved at the first meeting of the Petersburg Soviets on October 13th, 1903:—

The Birth of the Soviets

To all working men and women.

Comrades!

The All-Russia strike has begun. The working class, determined in its demand for the Constituent Assembly and Universal Suffrage, and not having received any rights, has resorted to the ultimate powerful weapon of the world Labour movement. And lo and behold! the blind power of the autocracy wavered in the

face of the conscious power of proletarian solidarity. The premier, Count de Witte, openly admitted to the railwaymen's deputies that the Government might fall.

Comrades! We, the delegates of the various Petersburg factories and workers, having discussed the situation, call upon all workers to give their support to the great cause—the fight for liberty, for the people's happiness. One more effort and the people will shake off the chains of age-long slavery. But for this effort the working class must close up its ranks, must come forward as the only organised force. It cannot be tolerated that sporadic strikes should spring up and die down in this or that factory or works.

Therefore we have decided to place the leadership of the movement into the hands of a General Workers' Committee. We propose that every factory, works and trade elect its deputies, one to every 500 persons. The meeting of factory or works' deputies will form the factory or works' committee. The meeting of all factory and works' committees will form the General Workers' Committee of Petersburg. By unifying our movements this committee will make its own organised and united force. It will be representative of the needs of the Petersburg workers before the other sections of society. It will determine how we are going to act during the strike and when we have to bring it to an end. Get organised, comrades. Elect deputies without delay. *Decisive events will take place in the near future. They will determine for many years to come the fate of the working class. We must meet these events in all consciousness and preparedness united by our General Workers' Committee under the glorious red banner of the proletariat of all countries and toiling peoples.*

Soviet of Peoples', Factories' and Works' Deputies.

The first Russian revolution was strangled by Tsarism. But the victory of Tsarism was a Pyrrhic victory, for the 1905 revolution played a tremendous role in the subsequent victorious struggle of the Russian proletariat and the international revolutionary movement. It brought millions into the movement. During its process the widest strata received a sound revolutionary tempering. "The real training of the masses can never be separated from an independent, political, and in particular revolutionary, struggle of the masses. Only the struggle trains the exploited classes, only the struggle discloses to them the real extent of their strength, extent of their vision, increases their capacity, clarifies their minds, and forges their will."—(Lenin.)

Extracts from Lenin's Writings

REFORMS AND REVOLUTION

"It is only by Marxism that the relation of reforms to revolution can be exactly or rationally determined. Marx could only see this relationship from the point of view of his own period, before the proletariat had won, even in a single country, a victory which was at all solid or durable. In these circumstances the basis of a correct attitude was: reforms are by-products of the struggle of the revolutionary working class. After the proletarian victory, even if only in one country, a new element appears in the relationship of reform to revolution. In principle, nothing is changed, but the form suffers a modification that Marx could not foresee, but which could only be conceived on the basis of the philosophy and the politics of Marxism. After the victory, reforms (while still remaining on the international arena a by-product) are also, in the country of the victorious proletariat, a necessary and legitimate truce, when the forces are not sufficiently strong to pass through this or that stage of development. Victory gives a certain reserve strength, which gives one an opportunity to last out materially and morally, even during a forced retreat."

—LENIN (*Theory and Practice of Leninism*, by J. Stalin, pp. 110-111.)

THE NEW STATE POWER

"The Republic of Soviets of workers', soldiers' and peasants' delegates is not only a higher type of democratic institution, but is also the form capable of ensuring the most painless realisation of Socialism." (Theses on the Constituent Assembly.)

A witty German Social-Democrat of the 'seventies of last century called the *post office* an example of the Socialist system. This is very true. At present the post office is a business organised on the lines of a State capitalist monopoly. Imperialism is gradually transforming all trusts into organisations of a similar type. Above the "common" workers, who are overloaded with work and yet starve, there stands the same bourgeois bureaucracy. But the mechanism of social management is here already to hand. We have but to overthrow the capitalists, to crush with the iron hand of the armed workers the resistance of these exploiters, to break the bureaucratic machine of the modern State—and we have before us a highly technically-fashioned machine freed of its parasites, which can quite well be set going by the united workers themselves, hiring their own technical advisers, their own inspectors, their own clerks, and paying them all, as, indeed, every "State" official, with the usual workers' wage. Here is a concrete task immediately practicable and realisable as regards all trusts, which would rid the workers of exploitation and which would make practical use of the experience (especially in the task of the reconstruction of the State) which the Commune has given us. To organise our whole national economy like the postal system, but in such a way that the technical experts, inspectors, clerks and indeed, all persons employed, should receive no higher wage than the working man, and the whole under the management of the armed proletariat—this is our immediate aim. This is the kind of State and the economic basis we need. This is what will produce the destruction of parliamentarism, while retaining representative institutions. This is what will free the labouring classes from the prostitution of these institutions by the capitalist class.

—LENIN (*The State and Revolution*, pp. 65-66.)

WHEN THE HOUR IS RIPE FOR REVOLUTION

"One can consider the time ripe for the decisive battle when all the forces of classes hostile to us are sufficiently wasted in internecine quarrels, and weakened in their mutual strife; when all the intermediate elements which are hesitating and unstable (*i.e.*, the petit bourgeois democrats) are sufficiently unmasked, and their prestige lowered, by their failure in practice; when the mass of the proletariat begin to applaud the most revolutionary acts against the bourgeoisie. Then the time is ripe for revolution. Then if we have been keeping good account of all the conditions enumerated above, and have well chosen the moment, our victory is assured."

—LENIN (*Left-Wing Communism.*)

The fundamental law of revolution confirmed by all revolutions, and particularly by all three Russian revolutions of the twentieth century, is as follows: It is not sufficient for the revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes: for the revolution it is necessary that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule as of old. Only when the masses *do not want* the old regime, and when the rulers are *unable* to govern them as of old, then only can the revolution succeed. This truth may be expressed in other words, revolution is impossible without an all-national crisis, affecting both the exploited and the exploiters. It follows that for the revolution it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand the necessity for a revolution, and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; second, that the ruling class be in a state of governmental crisis which attracts even the most backward masses into politics. It is a sign of every real revolution, this rapid tenfold, or even hundredfold, increase in the number of representatives of the toiling and oppressed masses, heretofore apathetic, who are able to carry on a political fight which weakens the government and facilitates its overthrow by the revolutionaries.

—LENIN (*Left-Wing Communism.*)

THE TASKS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY CLASS

History in general, the history of revolutions in particular, has always been richer, more varied and variform, more vital and "cunning" than is conceived of by the best parties, by the most conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes. This is natural, for the best vanguards express the consciousness, will, passions and fancies of but tens of thousands, whereas the revolution is effected at the moment of the exceptional uplift and exertion of *all* the human faculties—consciousness, will, passion, phantasy—of tens of millions, spurred on by the bitterest class war. From this there follow two very important practical conclusions; first, the revolutionary class, for the realisation of its object, must be able to master *all* forms or aspects of social activity, without the slightest exception (completing, after the conquest of political power, sometimes with great risk and tremendous danger, what had been left undone before this conquest); secondly, that the revolutionary classes must be ready for the most rapid and unexpected substitution of one form for another.

—LENIN (*Left-Wing Communism.*)

SEVER CONNECTION WITH OPPORTUNIST-MENSHEVIKS

(Extract from a speech delivered at the Third Congress of the Communist International, 28-11-21.)

It is not enough to know by heart Communist resolutions and to use revolutionary forms of speech at every opportunity. This is not enough, and we are decidedly against all Communists who know by heart this or that resolution. The pre-requisite of sincere Communism is severance from opportunism. We shall talk freely and openly to all Communists who subscribe to this, and we shall be entitled to say to them boldly: "Do not commit foolish acts, be wise and clever." But such language will only be addressed to Communists who have severed all connection with opportunism, and this does not as yet apply to you. Therefore, I reiterate, I hope that the Congress will endorse the resolution of the Executive Committee. Comrade Lazzari said: "We are in a preparatory period." Nothing could be truer. You are in a preparatory period. The first phase of this period is—severance from the Mensheviks, similar to the severance between us and our Mensheviks in 1903. And it is due to the fact that the German Party has not broken off all connection with the Mensheviks, that the entire German working class is undergoing great hardship and suffering during the prolonged and wearisome post-war period in the history of the German revolution.

THE PARTY AND ITS MISTAKES

"The attitude of a political party towards its mistakes is one of the surest and most important tests of its seriousness, of its ability to discharge its duties towards its class and the labouring masses. To recognise a mistake openly, to find out its causes, to analyse the situation which occasioned it, to examine carefully the means of repairing it—this is the mark of a serious party, that is what, in the case of a party, is called doing one's duty, educating the class and so the masses."

—LENIN (*Left-Wing Communism.*)

"They [the opponents of the Marxists] are overjoyed at the sight of our discussions: they will attempt to exploit for their own ends certain passages in this book devoted to the mistakes and short-comings of our Party. The Russian Marxists are already sufficiently steeled in battle not to let themselves be troubled by these pinpricks, to continue their task of self-criticism and of merciless exposure of their own defects, which will inevitably disappear as the working-class movement is strengthened."

—LENIN (*One Step Forward,* 1904.)

Questions Before the Party Congress

By R. PALME DUTT

THE coming Party Congress is the first since the adoption of the new line. It is the first in the new period of rationalisation, Mondism and the open alliance of the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy with capitalism to disarm the working class organisations, crush out the revolutionary workers and prepare future coalition and war. To meet this new situation the whole tactics of our Party have had to go through the melting pot; and the process is not yet complete. Many questions are still unsolved; many new ones are only beginning to take shape. In consequence, this Congress is confronted with a wider range of questions and wider opportunities of moulding policy than any since the foundation congresses of the Party.

In a single contribution it is not possible to deal with more than a few of the questions raised. In the present article it will be attempted to deal with (1) certain new developments of the general situation in the past twelve months and questions which have arisen on them; (2) certain current questions of tactics in meeting the new situation.

I.—*Rationalisation, British Home Industry and the Empire*

The principal question of the general situation is the close connection of the new period and the new line. There has been a tendency to treat the new line too narrowly as a special question of tactics in relation to the Labour Party. But the new line is the outcome of the whole new period of capitalism, both internationally and in Britain: of the advance to State capitalism and rationalisation, with intensified pressure on the working class, which includes equally the Trade Union Act and the absorption of the reformist-controlled working class organisations; with the consequence that the discontent and gathering wave of struggle of the workers from below, in the face of new sharp issues, has to battle for realisation against a hardening system of blocking barriers. It is this situation that compels the necessity of the independent leadership of the Communist Party, of the direct leadership of the

masses by the Communist Party, as the condition of advance of the working-class struggle in the present period. This is the central issue of the present period. The relationship to the Labour Party and election policy are only forms of expression of it. This central issue needs to be clearly brought out as the dominating feature of our analysis of the general situation (the present draft repeats at too great length ground already covered by the International Congress thesis, which could be more rapidly resumed, instead of concentrating on and bringing out sharply the special tactical significance and lessons of the situation for our Party; the treatment of the new line is completely divorced from the treatment of the situation).

The decisive character of the present situation in Britain is the attempt of British capitalism to reorganise on the basis of the victory of 1926, along the lines of rationalisation, industrial peace and control of the Labour movement.

Discussion has taken place as to the prospects of rationalisation in Britain, and its effects on our estimate of the economic perspective. These discussions have been in great part inconclusive, because the question has been too unreally framed in terms of general possibility or otherwise. But the important fact is that rationalisation *is* taking place; and the special difficulties in Britain only mean that it takes correspondingly special forms. The difficulty of achieving a new capital basis and technical re-equipment in the older industries only means that a correspondingly greater weight is given to the side of the direct attack on the conditions of the working class. Mondism becomes the distinctive feature of rationalisation in Britain. It is here that British capitalism has achieved its principal success in the home field. The new and important feature of the situation is the measure of capitalist absorption of the Labour movement, the tendency to turn the trade unions to the position of company unions. It is this situation that compels the new line.

A further new question has been raised on the situation. With the process of rationalisation, the concentration on home industry increases; the proportion of new capital issues going to home purposes has markedly risen. Does this affect our analysis of the general process of imperialist development and decline, and in particular of increasing industrial development in the colonies as a factor in the decline of industry in Britain? In answering this question it is necessary to make a distinction.

In general, no new or basic question is here raised of our

analysis of imperialism and its increasingly parasitic character. The analysis of the Seventh Enlarged Executive at the end of 1926

> "The decline of British industry, and the tendency of the transference of industrial activity from the centre of the Empire to its circumference, hasten the development of the parasitic character of British capitalism and the growth of the rentier class as the dominating group of the British capitalists."—(Seventh Enlarged Executive Resotion on the English Question, §32.)

remains correct. The increase in the proportion of home capital issues is an important phenomenon, and reflects the decline in the total new capital resources available for maintaining the Empire. But the main proportion of the new home issues goes to the new and luxury industries, to financial companies, and to the flotation of old concerns; the amount going to basic new industrial development is still very slight. Sir Robert Kindersley has estimated that the actual new capital investments in 1927 (after deducting sinking fund repayments, re-sales, etc.) was £75,000,000 abroad and £10,000,000 at home, or less than 12 per cent. to home purposes. Our general analysis of the process of imperialist decay remains stronger than ever.

But a special question in relation to colonial policy has been raised, and here an error has been corrected by the Sixth Congress. As our delegation was specially involved in controversy over this, and the writings of several of us, including myself, have been subjected to criticism, it is important that at our Party Congress we should clear up this question and get clear both what mistake has been put right and what remains correct.

II.—Colonial Policy, Industrialisation and Decolonisation

It is only possible here to write very briefly on this question, which will require fuller treatment elsewhere.

The question at issue in the colonial discussion at the Sixth Congress was not as to the *fact* of increasing industrial development in the colonies, including India, and its consequences both in the colonies and on the British economic situation, but as to the *policy* of British imperialism, *i.e.*, whether it was correct to speak of British imperialism pursuing a new policy, a policy of conscious and active "industrialisation" in India, rather than still remaining hostile to any real industrial development, and only to a limited degree making certain concessions, adaptations, etc.

A survey of typical modern developments (decline of basic industry in the metropolis, increase of industrial development in

the new countries, including the colonies, British financial control of overseas industry competing with British home industry, decline of revenue from exports, increase of revenue from overseas capital investments) had led us to emphasise in our propaganda this increasingly parasitic character of British imperialism and its ruinous effects for the British working class as a whole.

It is important to be clear that this propaganda remains perfectly correct. Thus Lenin in his "Imperialism" quotes with approval from Schulze-Gaevernitz, as illustrating the parasitic tendency of imperialism:

> "Europe will shift the burden of physical toil—first agricultural and mining, then of heavy industry—on to the black races, and will remain itself at leisure in the occupation of bondholder, thus perhaps paving the way for the economic, and later the political, emancipation of the coloured races."—("Imperialism," English edition, page 123.)

But there is a special kind of error which it is necessary to guard against. This is to simplify the process by declaring that British imperialism actively and consicously utilises its State power in a colony in a given case (actually the only case in question at present is India) to pursue a policy of industrialisation in order to raise its profits. This conception arose in great part from the phenomena of 1920-1923 in India, when the British Government did carry through a certain number of measures to promote industrial development there. In stressing this process of industrialisation, I endeavoured to stress in every way its significance as meaning the super-exploitation of the colonial workers and closer riveting of the claims of colonial slavery. But this theory of industrialisation in this sense, if logically pursued, would lead to a non-understanding of the essential character of our colonial theory. For it ultimately would mean that the imperialist Power pursues a policy of developing the productive forces of a colony to the position of an advanced industrial country and an independent productive force, only financially dependent on the imperialist country, and thus advancing on the path to emancipation. This is what is meant by the statement at the Sixth Congress that the theory of industrialisation would lead ultimately to what has been called the theory of "decolonisation" (a term never actually used by myself or by any comrade in our Party, but put forward by one or two comrades abroad). It is, of course, clear that the true productive development of the colonial country can only come *after* the overthrow of the imperialist rule. Imperialism may for

its own purposes carry forward particular measures in a colony which will enable it to heighten its exploitation, to suck the victim more completely. How far this may go in relation to certain forms of industrial development is still a matter for further investigation. But it will never carry through a real policy of harmonious development of the productive forces of the colony, *i.e.*, a real industrialisation such as the Soviet Government is carrying through with heavy sacrifices in its territory.

Nevertheless, the analysis of the parasitic role of imperialism, and the significance of the process of industrial expansion in the colonies and decay in the metropolis, remains. The forces of industrial development go forward in the colonies, despite the restrictive role of imperialism, partly through the rising national bourgeoisie in the face of imperialist opposition, partly through the special needs of imperialism itself, partly through particularist interests of sections of British finance-capital. These developing forces, by their intensification of the contradictions between imperialism and its colony, and by the growth of the industrial proletariat, are revolutionary dynamic forces of first importance both in relation to the colony and to the British home economic situation.

III.—Tasks of the New Period

It has been noted already that in the discussion of the new line there has been a tendency to restrict it to the special questions of the Labour Party and election policy. This was in part natural at the outset, both because this aspect served to present the question most sharply, and in particular because there were important misconceptions on the question of the Labour Party, a Labour Government, Lenin's policy, etc., to be cleared out of the way. But it is now all the more important to concentrate on bringing out the wider significance of the line as a fight for the independent mass leadership of the Communist Party in the whole new period of class struggle in Britain, the particular election fight being no more than one means, and not the most important means, towards this.

The decisive question of the present period may be framed as follows: Under whose banner will the new gathering wave of struggle develop? How will the leadership of the British working class in the struggles ahead be realised, now that the existing reformist leadership and machine have passed completely into open coalition with capitalism?

The entire forces of capitalism and reformism are concentrated to-day on smashing, isolating from mass influence, and

politically destroying the revolutionary nucleus in the working class, represented by the Communist Party and the workers who march with it, as the sole nucleus of leadership remaining not under their direct or indirect influence. The answer to this situation is the new line of the Communist Party, *i.e.*, the direct fight to win the masses to its leadership.

The heart of the fight to-day thus turns on the attempt of capitalism and the reformist leadership to isolate the mass movement from Communism, and establish a new period of capitalist dominion and revival, and the counter-fight of the Communist Party to establish its direct independent leadership of the masses, and defeat the capitalist-reformist policy of stabilised servitude.

The menace of isolation can give rise to two types of tendency. One is, in fear of isolation, to retreat on to the defensive, to dilute and weaken the basic character of our fight, to moderate criticism, to seek to march under false banners, and to fall into opportunist errors, through fear of losing contact with the masses. This line, so far from diminishing the attack, only encourages the reformist leadership to attack further, and weakens the position of Communism in the working class.

The correct line is to meet the attack by strengthening our offensive, and launching into the fight for our direct independent leadership of the working class, defeating the reformist attempt to isolate us by our direct approach to the masses.

But the success of the new line depends on the direct approach to the masses. The united front from below is the key to the success of the new line and the necessary means of realisation of our independent leadership. In proportion as the reformists try to cut us off by their control of the machine, it becomes ever more vital, at the same time as fighting stubbornly for our "rights" within the machine, to find ever new and ever more means of direct contact with the masses, as the sole final reply to their attack. *It is to-day a life-and-death fight for the Party, in which the alternatives are either political extinction, or else to emerge once and for all strongly and impregnably based, beyond the reach of paper constitutions and persecutions, upon a solid body of mass support behind the open independent leadership of the Party.*

The direct election fight is one such means, not only to give the clearest expression to the independent political line of the Party, but also as a form and method of mobilising mass support around the direct leadership of the Party, and giving this support a conscious and organised character. It is for this reason that the independent fight in every constituency, the fight to secure

a candidate and for our united front programme, is no less important than the fight in those relatively few constituencies where we are finally able to run candidates.

Even more important in the present period is our role in strikes, and the direct leadership of strikes. This will assume increasing importance in the present period, as the already gathering new wave of strikes develops under the conditions of Mondism and the official industrial peace policy.

But the most important of all and finally decisive for the basic and lasting extension of the mass influence of the Party, lies in the question of the factories and the development of mass factory organisation (not simply Party factory nuclei). This question will have to be squarely faced by the Congress and given full and careful discussion, and a strong lead will have to come out from the Congress. A passive attitude in the face of the known and admitted difficulties of this question is equivalent to defeat for the Party. (This issue is well brought out in the Trade Union Draft Thesis, and is also stressed in the Labour Party Thesis, but is very perfunctorily treated in an addendum on "special tasks" at the end of the main draft thesis on the "Situation and Tasks," instead of being brought into the centre of the situation and the Party's tasks).

In the presentment of the main tasks of the Party, it is essential to bring them into clear relation to the central guiding line of the fight for the independent mass leadership of the Party, expressed in the new line, which is the first and dominant task of the Party. The statement of the "principal tasks" of the Party in the draft thesis on the "Situation and Tasks" does not bring this out clearly enough, and is too formal and mechanical in character. It sets out as the "principal tasks":

(1) The fight against the war danger;
(2) the fight against the capitalist offensive;
(3) the fight for trade union unity on the basis of democracy and a change of leadership;
(4) the defence of the colonial revolutionary movements;
(5) the independent electoral fight.

With this may be contrasted the statement of the "main tasks of the British Communist Party in the present period" set out in the Sixth Congress Thesis on the "International Situation and Tasks," §44. These run:

(1) Full independence of the Communist Party;
(2) ruthless fight against the Labour Party;

(3) exposure of industrial peace and Mondism;
(4) strengthening of the Minority Movement;
(5) leadership of strikes;
(6) fight against the foreign policy of the Government and of the Labour Party;
(7) fight against intervention in China and anti-Soviet war preparations;
(8) support of the Indian revolution.

The contrast of these two statements of the main tasks of the British Communist Party in the present period is so striking as to deserve careful study, both as indicating the correct line, and as helping to make us aware in our own ranks of just those tendencies in our Party treatment of issues which are in danger of diverging from the correct international line.

It will be desirable to revise our statement of the main tasks in the draft thesis in the light of the international thesis.

IV.—Special Tactical Problems

The Ninth Plenum Resolution on the English question gave the decision in principle on the new line, but left a number of detail questions to be further worked out.

In particular, the following questions were not finally settled:

(1) The affiliation campaign was to be temporarily continued, but the possibility of its abandonment in the near future was held out.
(2) On the political levy, an agitation was to be conducted for local control; but the general question of the political levy, including the question of trade union disaffiliation from the Labour Party, was not further touched.
(3) The question of voting in constituencies where we had no candidate remained in some uncertainty, although the main principle of the fight to secure a candidate or to secure acceptance of our united front demands by a candidate was clearly laid down.
(4) The question of the National Left Wing Movement was left completely untouched.

All these questions have now become pressing for decision; and since the Ninth Plenum a number of developments have taken place which have stressed their urgency.

At the District Conferences, which endorsed the new line by overwhelming majorities, a considerable body of opinion expressed itself hostile to the continuance of the affiliation campaign

and the political levy under the new conditions. In the nine months since the adoption and experience of the new line this body of opinion has rapidly grown (contrast of the London District Conference of March, 1928, with a minority of 44 against affiliation campaign to 62 for continuance, and London District Conference of December, 1928, with a majority of 81 to none against affiliation, 45 to 39 against the political levy, and 63 to 18 against the present form and character of the National Left-Wing Movement). The discussion in the Party press has shown a similar tendency.

Immediately after the new line a series of bye-elections revealed considerable uncertainty and hesitation in its execution. At Linlithgow a candidate was at first put forward, and then withdrawn, and the instruction was finally given to abstain from voting. But at Hanley immediately after the instruction was given to vote for the Labour candidate "on the grounds that the Communist Party was not in a position to put forward a candidate." Finally, at Aberdeen a candidate was run. The net effect until Aberdeen was to create an impression of wavering; and it became evident that it was necessary to work out clearly, and make clear for the workers, the lines of action in all cases. At the Aberdeen election, which was a signal victory for the Party, it further became clear that it would be necessary to work out the question of our election programme with considerable care in order to give a true expression to the Communist standpoint.

Still more, the Maxton-Cook campaign in the summer opened out further problems. This campaign was essentially, as its development rapidly showed, a left reformist campaign to counter the new line of the Party in order to draw to itself the rising left tendencies within the working class and shepherd them within the fold of the Labour Party. Here it was the plain duty of the Communist Party, while declaring its readiness to fight alongside any genuine opposition movement, to expose with the utmost sharpness from the outset the basic illusions (conception of the reform of the Labour Party and advocacy of a Labour Government), inadequacies and dishonesties of this campaign, and, from the moment of its self-exposure (Glasgow) to combat it directly. Nevertheless, the tendency of our Party campaign on this issue was, while expressing criticism, to build up the hopes of the workers around this campaign, and even after the exposure of its reactionary character before the workers at Glasgow (fear of the masses, suppression of discussion and criticism, solidarity with Hicks) to continue to urge constructive proposals upon its leaders.

In addition, the problem of the National Left-Wing Movement has become increasingly urgent. With the completion of the Labour Party discipline as a full social-democratic party, and with the explicit rejection on our part of the possibility of reform of the Labour Party, the political position of the National Left-Wing has basically changed from the conditions of its inception. It has become no longer simply an opposition movement within the Labour Party, but a national political organisation outside the Labour Party, with its own political programme and national organisation, parliamentary election policies and candidates, standing between the Labour Party and the Communist Party, on a basis of "militant socialism" to be achieved by a Left Labour Government (the National Left-Wing is defined as existing for those "left workers who are still in favour of a Labour Government, but who are becoming more and more critical of the bourgeois policy of the Labour Party."—Political Secretariat "Party Discussion Material," page 12). For our Party to take the responsibility of direct political leadership within this organisation and sponsorship of its programme is to frustrate completely the new line, which is based on the repudiation of the Labour Party and of the objective of a Labour Government. The clearing of this position has thus become an urgent condition of the true realisation of the new line.

All these questions will now have to reach decision at the Party Congress.

Of these questions the two which have received the most attention during the recent discussion, the questions of affiliation and the political levy, are really of a secondary character.

Affiliation is already admittedly dead by the march of events.

The political levy is more complicated, and has divided opinion in the Party more evenly; but it is not an issue affecting the main line of the Party. Nevertheless, it is necessary to recognise that the issue is not simple. Many of the arguments for the political levy are far from convincing, and recall the outlook of before the new line. The argument that the payment of the political levy is a price for the winning of "rights" in the Labour Party which admittedly do not exist, or alternatively for proving once again that these "rights" do not exist, is to return to the old outlook of the continued exposure of the Labour Party from within, when we have already advanced to the direct fight against the Labour Party. Again, the argument that we should pay the levy to-day, although it goes to the Labour Party, because our ultimate conquest of the unions will win it to a better purpose and smooth out the "anomalies" ("the anomalies will disappear as

we progressively win the working class for our new policy."—Political Secretariat "Party Discussion Material," page 3) savours dangerously of the same passive constitutional outlook which led to the error of continuing the slogan of "All Power to the General Council," because we work for a future revolutionary trade union centralisation, after the exposure in fact of the treacherous character of the existing General Council. Just as it was pointed out that we must first *change* the General Council, and then can go forward with all power for a revolutionary General Council, on the same line it could be urged that we must first gain control of the unions and then can correctly go forward with the slogan of a political fund for revolutionary political purposes

It is necessary, not only to repudiate these types of arguments for the political levy, but also to face certain facts frankly. The political levy is nominally a political fund of the unions which they are free to expend as they think fit. But in practice, as it exists to-day, and as it is likely to exist, at any rate, for some time under Birmingham and similar restrictive rules, it is with small exceptions a fund for the support of the Labour Party or parliamentary activities on the lines of the Labour Party, and membership of the Labour Party is based upon the payment of the levy. MacDonald and the reformist leadership watch anxiously the proportion of the payment of the levy as the measure of their strength in the unions. Payment of the political levy means increasing the membership of the Labour Party, which we have declared a social-democratic party with reserve. Advocating the payment of the political levy means in its result, whether we like it or not, recruiting for the Labour Party, which we are engaged in fighting with all our force.

Nevertheless, although there are thus very strong arguments against the payment of the political levy, the advocacy of non-payment, even though accompanied by a voluntary collection or fund for the Communist election fight, raises very serious issues. Our opposition is in reality to the handing over of the political levy to the Labour Party and its purposes, but not to the political levy itself. We need to concentrate our agitation against the misdirection of the political fund of the unions to the Labour Party, which does not represent the workers, but serves the capitalists. But we defeat this agitation to draw the unions from the Labour Party, if our opposition appears to be to the political levy itself. We then appear to range ourselves on the side of the political neutrality of the unions, and on the side of the politically apathetic in the unions. It means that we would be on this particular issue supporting the bourgeois campaign in the unions which seeks to cut

off the unions from political activity. It is true that the object of those who advocate this is to defeat the alternative bourgeois campaign in the unions, represented by MacDonald, which seeks to tie the unions to the Labour Party. But our fight is against both bourgeois camps, both to defeat the campaign which seeks to destroy the political funds of the unions, and to defeat the misuse of those political funds for the bourgeois Labour Party. The necessity of this fight is not governed by the immediate prospect of success or non-success, any more than the whole of our fight in the unions; it is the agitation itself that is all-important. To abandon the fight on this issue means in reality to abandon the fight for the unions. So long as we are continuing the fight in the unions, we need also to continue the fight on the political levy and against its payment to the Labour Party; and the proposal to drop the fight on this, in favour of an individual breakaway, means in reality in the last analysis to raise the whole issue of the unions, but to raise it in an incorrect form, *i.e.*, on a minor issue.

This position, that we are not opposed to the maintenance of the political fund of the unions, but only to its handing over to the Labour Party, still compels the continuance of payment of the political levy. But it is not a position that we can regard with any great satisfaction; and it becomes increasingly difficult as the unions are becoming increasingly subordinated in their whole organisation and constitutions to the Labour Party. Even while deciding that at present we need to continue paying the levy, it is necessary to be prepared to review this question again in the near future, and in the light of the whole developing position of the unions in relation to the Labour Party and the consequent conditions of our fight in them.

The problem with regard to election policy, of our line in those constituencies where we have no candidate (that is, under present conditions, in the vast majority) will also be before the Congress. This question is of vital importance in principle, because it involves the whole understanding and realisation in practice of the independence of our political line from the line of the Labour Party. Here it is clear that it is the positive side which it all-important, the positive fight to secure a candidate, raise agitation and mobilise support, and the positive fight for our united front demands and for the support for them from the workers against the official Labour candidate, where we have no candidate of our own. But in the final issue of voting at the General Election it is necessary to reach a clear line which will be universally understood without mistake, and the only finally clear line, which makes

a break with the old traditional mergings, is to advocate voting only for those candidates, apart from our own, who are prepared to support our united front demands.

Finally, on the question of the National Left-Wing. This is the most difficult and serious of the special tactical problems confronting the Congress. It is a type of problem which will continually recur in many varying forms in the present period, as the distintegration of reformism and of the Labour Party proceeds; and it involves the whole question of our correct relationship to the leftward-moving workers, to left opposition movements and to left reformism or centrism. Its solution depends on a very firm understanding of our basic political principles and methods, and it is a direction in which it is most easy for all of us to make both "right" and "left" errors. The experience of all parties has shown this, and it is worth noting that the strongest warnings of the International have been against "right" errors in this connection (problems of the left social-democratic workers and left social-democracy), and that in particular the special warning of the International to our Party at the present moment is against "right" errors.

The question of the National Left-Wing is the question of the role of our Party within it, in actively assisting to lead and organise it, and thus fully sponsoring it with the authority of the Party. As an independent organisation it has its own right to existence. What our Congress can determine is the role of our Party in relation to it, and its political value and role from the standpoint of our Party.

There is no question of the importance of united front activity among the leftward-moving workers as a vital factor for the growth of our Party, and further of every form of organised contact with them, whether through united front organs for special campaigns or through auxiliary non-party organs in special fields. There is also no question of the importance of the development of opposition movements within the Labour Party.

But the National Left-Wing Movement, as it exists to-day, has developed beyond any of the above characters, and taken on, as already noted, the character of a national political organisation with its own programme between the Labour Party and the Communist Party. This is what makes the defence of it as a united front organisation or non-party mass organisation inacceptable (apart from the question whether it is in fact able to reach more widely than the Party). The united front can be realised in campaigns for special limited aims (councils of action, workers' elec-

toral committees), or in special fields of work where we can act through auxiliary non-party organisations (Minority Movement in the trade unions, L.L.X. for workers' defence, I.C.W.P.A. to fight class-justice, etc.). But there can be no united front on the basis of a complete political programme, for a complete political programme implies a party.

That the National Left-Wing does represent itself as a political organisation with a complete specific political programme can be abundantly demonstrated. Thus under the heading, "What Is the Left-Wing?" its organ, the "Sunday Worker," recently declared on the eve of its National Conference:

> "The present Left-Wing is not subservient because it has a policy of its own, and therein also it differs from the sham 'Lefts' of the past. At next week's conference *a complete line of socialist policy* will be opposed to the Liberal programme which will be thrust upon the Birmingham Conference of the Labour Party.
>
> "It is a socialist policy which demands the attention and support of all inside the Labour Party or out who desire a policy aimed at ending capitalism and imperialism."—("Sunday Worker," 16-9-28.)

Thus the programme of the Left-Wing is presented as "a complete line of socialist policy" capable of "ending capitalism and imperialism"—without dictatorship, soviets or Communist Party. If this is not Centrism, what is? It should be added that in the same number the National Secretary of the Left-Wing declares the programme of Maxton and Cook to be "identical" with the programme of the Left-Wing. (It is important to note that what is in question here is not a criticism of individual expressions and actions of comrades who have held responsible positions in the Left-Wing, but of our present Party line in relation to it, which has given rise to these expressions and which it has been the task of these comrades to endeavour to interpret.)

The Draft Thesis on the Labour Party lays down:

> "The aim of the Left-Wing groups should be to seize every possible occasion on which to present to their fellow-members of the Labour Party and to the workers generally by broad mass activity *a revolutionary alternative to the policy of the reformist leadership.*"

What is this "revolutionary alternative" to the Labour Party policy? The "Party Discussion Material" declares that the programme of the Left-Wing is intended for "workers who are not yet prepared to leave the Labour Party" and "left workers who

are still in favour of a Labour Government." It would thus seem as if the "revolutionary alternative" which the Left-Wing is to represent is compatible with still unbroken illusions as to the possibilities of advance within the Labour Party and through a Labour Government—illusions which as a Communist Party we are struggling to destroy and expose as incompatible with any "revolutionary alternative." It would almost seem as if, while the new line is at length established in the Communist Party, the old line can still go merrily on and find a home in the National Left-Wing.

These examples of what is, at best, unclearness, but under the present conditions inevitably takes on a more definite and consistent character, could be endlessly extended; but the tendency is sufficiently familiar. If it is argued that it is necessary for the Communist Party to organise this tendency as a bridge to itself, then it becomes in the end equivalent to arguing that it is the task of the Communist Party to organise Centrism.

It is urged that it is necessary for the Communist Party to assist the left-wing workers and those moving to the left. This is correct, but it is not assisting them to encourage them in their illusions and appear to give to these the authority of the Communist Party. The truest assistance the Communist Party can give the left workers is precisely to combat their illusions and make war on every weakness, vagueness and inadequacy of outlook, at the same time as fighting alongside them in the issues of the daily struggle.

The question of the National Left-Wing Movement involves many further aspects which it is not possible here to touch. The whole position will need to be taken into serious review and discussion by the Congress. It will not be possible for the Congress to give any decision in detail on the practical questions involved; but it should be possible to reach a clear decision in principle on the issues involved, which should serve as guidance for the future.

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I should like to add a personal note at the end. I regret very much that I am still disabled from taking direct part in the present Congress. I have tried to state as clearly as possible my views on some of the main questions before the Congress, and must ask the forgiveness of comrades for taking more than my fair share of space, because it is my only opportunity in this way to put forward my views.

Is there a Right Danger—or a Left?

By J. STRAIN

COMRADE MURPHY'S article on the "Right Danger" reminds one of a showman setting up his Aunt Sallies for the pleasure he obtains in knocking them over himself. When dealing with the political levy, he says: "It is argued, however, that we must pay: first, because without payment we have no political rights in the union; second, because the unions have political funds as distinct from the Labour Party, part of them being available for other things than the Labour Party." He then calmly proceeds to knock over the argument he has built by the simple process of saying: "The first is not correct. Payment gives no political rights whatever." In the same breath he defines political rights as the right to represent the union on local and national Labour Parties and the right to stand as Labour candidates, where he refers to the Birmingham decisions taking our rights away. Comment on this is needless. "As for the second," he says, "it makes no difference so long as the union is affiliated to the Labour Party."

The Levy and the Union Rules

Since he expresses a keen desire to face realities I should like to confront him with clause 8 of the political rules, which says: "A member who is exempt from the obligation to contribute to the political fund of the union shall not be excluded from any benefits of the union, or placed in any respect, either directly or indirectly, under any disability or disadvantage as compared with other members of the union (except in relation to the control or management of the political fund of the union) by reason of his being so exempt." The foregoing proves conclusively that non-payment prevents union members from moving against affiliation to the Labour Party, or in any way having a decisive voice in determining how any portion of the political fund shall be spent. On his second point, it seems quite clear that, so long as the union is affiliated to the Labour Party, it makes all the difference to us in our agitation against Labour Party domination in the

unions, that we should pay the political levy because without paying we have no "control or management of the political fund." The new line makes it perfectly clear that we pursue an independent policy in opposition to the Labour Party, therefore the question of reforming that body does not arise, except in comrade Murphy's imagination.

He alleges that "local control of the political levy places the branch in an invidious position" because "the funds have been collected on the basis of affiliation to the Labour Party," and subjects them to the law of misappropriation of funds and to the discipline of the union executive. No one yet has argued that the branches should take control of the political fund, and he is again erecting something which he can conveniently knock down. The arguments are that we should agitate for an alteration of rules governing the political fund to give the branches power to retain a portion of it which they can use in the support of a Communist candidate or in furtherance of a revolutionary policy. If this alteration is achieved, and I see no reason for pessimism on the subject, the branches will be at liberty to financially support a Communist candidate without transgressing any rule. Moreover, the Labour Party is not mentioned in the political rules, even once, and the levy cannot, therefore, be collected on the basis of affiliation to the Labour Party.

Affiliation to the Labour Party is a separate question, and requires a separate vote. It is surely common knowledge that the unions' M.P.'s and candidates are primarily under the control of the union executive and it is quite conceivable for a union to have a Parliamentary panel whilst being in opposition to the Labour Party. In those circumstances those M.P.'s and candidates would not run on the Labour Party ticket. Therefore, it is our duty to pay the political levy so that we can fight for its diversion into revolutionary channels. To argue that non-payment of the levy will free the branches from Labour Party discipline ignores the political rules and presupposes that we have reached the stage where the union members have refused to pay the levy. Such an argument is obviously absurd, and, if it were adopted, will leave the political work of the union completely at the mercy of the Labour Party bureaucracy.

About the National Left-Wing

His arguments against the National Left-Wing Movement are based on the fact that it has "a programme, a national committee, district committees, local committees, district conferences,

annual national conferences and a paper. On all important questions, including elections, it makes its own pronouncements and runs its own candidates and recruits members." Since that is the basis of his objection to the N.L.W.M. one would naturally expect to find him in opposition to the National Minority Movement. But, no! It is just on this very problem he confounds our anticipations—if we had any. He declares unreservedly in favour of the N.M.M., which has all the "apparatus of a party," and actually suggests a line which will give the N.M.M. all the apparatus of a revolutionary Communist Party, where, he says, the unions should "affiliate to the National Minority Movement and the local Trades Councils formed of the union branches attached to the N.M.M.," and in election time support the C.P. candidates, the branch members attaching themselves to the Communist workers' electoral committees." If this could be carried out it would be as easy and more sensible to establish a mass Communist Party, and therefore it would be foolish for us to think of it. If we tried to put it into practice all the arguments he enunciates against the N.L.W.M. would be increased one hundredfold, because neither he or anyone else working in a Party fraction could prevent such a body, having both political and industrial commitments, from making its "own pronouncements, selecting its own candidates, etc." It will be even more advantageously placed in relation to these things than either the N.L.W.M. or the N.M.M. are at present.

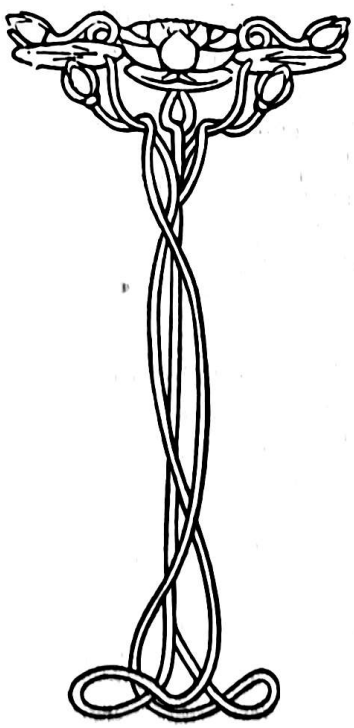
To argue that we can usefully dispense with the N.L.W.M. presupposes that all those sympathisers who are in it are literally clamouring at the gates of our Party for admission, which if it were true would give us the nucleus of a mass Party in about one month's time. That such is not the case is borne out by the fact that a hundred left-wing movements won't keep anyone out of our Party who wants to come in.

A peculiar feature of the arguments advanced by those comrades who are opposed to the retention of the N.L.W.M. is that they invariably propose an alternative form of left-wing organisation, and in comrade Murphy's case the alternative will be much more confusing, for the reasons already stated, than the N.L.W.M. can ever hope to be. If we can dispense with it surely it is logical to suggest we can dispense with the alternatives proposed. The most important aspect of the N.L.W.M.'s utility to the C.P. is the avenue it offers us to reach the masses, and without it we could never, at our present strength, hope to reach them as effectively.

He favours the formation of united front committees for par-

ticular objects, and scrapping them when the object has been obtained. One would imagine that our Party members had plenty of spare time on their hands to set up united front committees on these lines. One could enumerate about a dozen objects around which united front committees will have to be organised, and these are always fresh objects arising before any of the existing ones can be dispensed with. The reasons for the establishment of the N.L.W.M. are still with us and clamouring more loudly for its retention in the meantime as a Party tactic.

Comrade Murphy's question ought to be, "Is there a Left Danger?" and it appears to the writer that we are confronted with a section—infinitesimal, it is true—in our Party who, if they had their way, would drive our Party into the wilderness, where it would ultimately become a school of philosophical socialists debating nightly, not on how we are going to get socialism but on what is the meaning of socialism?



The Ninth Plenum Resolution and its Critics

By J. R. CAMPBELL

"The great merit of the British Communist Party consists in its capacity to establish an effective collaboration with all the Left elements on the most important current questions of policy."—(Resolution of Sixth Enlarged Executive on the Trade Union Question, February-March, 1926.)

"The attitude of the Comintern and the Communist Parties towards the growing opposition within the reformist trade unions is quite clear. *It is the outcome of the fundamental rules of Bolshevist tactics; support at all times for every opposition movement within reformist political and economic organisations which is directed against the theory and practice of these organisations.* We cannot and must not wait until these Left tendencies crystalise completely, *we must use all our energy and resolution to assist these workers who are beginning to shake themselves free of reformist ideology.* We must do our best to establish close contact and correct mutual relations between Communist workers, social-democratic workers and non-Party workers. In a word, Communist Parties must be quick to respond to all processes within the reformist organisations—*to all ideological ferment, and to their utmost to help these elements with the reformist organisations in their struggle against class collaboration.*"—(Italics ours. Same resolution as above.)

MUCH of the confusion in the discussion on the tactical line of the Party is due to the fact that many comrades have forgotten the Ninth Plenum resolution, which outlines the political basis for the changed attitude of our Party towards the Labour Party. In reading through the contributions to "Workers' Life" one is struck by the calm assumption that the new policy implies our Party coming out against the Labour Party as an isolated sect, and that, therefore, such things as the political levy

and the Left-Wing should be scrapped as remnants of the old line. We are told that the retention of those things in our policy is "double dealing," is "telling the workers one thing one day and another thing the next day," and so on. If those comrades had tried to grasp the meaning of the Ninth Plenum resolution they would have found that the resolutions instead of advocating that we come out with our candidates in opposition to the Labour Party on a purely sectarian basis, advocated the intensification of the Party struggle in the small number of Labour Parties and Trades Councils in which we had a foothold, the intensification of our struggle inside the union branches, no less than in our direct approach to the masses so that we break through the discipline of the local Labour Party and embark on our independent fight on the basis of the support of local working-class organisations for our Party policy, as well as the support of those workers whom we mobilise in our direct mass campaigns. It is true that we are coming out against certain leaders of the Labour Party, independent of whether we have even this local support or not, but the main lines of our approach to the great majority of the constituencies are clearly indicated in the resolution.

> "Owing to the peculiar form of connection that exists between the trade unions and the Labour Party, the Communist Party, while not affiliated to the Labour Party and enjoying no rights in that organisation, is at the present time compelled frequently to conform to Labour Party discipline. (For example, it is compelled to accept the decisions of Selection Conferences which selects Parliamentary candidates in the name of "organised labour as a whole.") It is now necessary to begin a strenuous fight against the discipline, which is imposed on the Labour movement by the Liberal-Labour bureaucracy, which suppresses the will of the workers and hampers the freedom of action of the Communist Party by inducing local Labour Parties to call new Selection Conferences on the basis of full rights of all workers in the Labour Party, including Communists, *and by calling unofficial Selection Conferences when the existing local Labour Parties, dominated by the bureaucratic machine, either refuse to do so or organise the campaign in a purely bureaucratic manner.*"—(Italics ours.)
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> "This general change in tactic of the Communist Party determines also the election tactic of the Party. During the elections the Party will act as an independent organisation with its own platform, slogans, etc., distinct from and opposed to all other contending forces. The Communist Party will put forward independently the largest possible

number of its own candidates. It will give the fullest support to the candidates of disaffiliated parties and put up against the scab candidates of the official Labour Party. *Simultaneously,* the campaign for calling new Selection Conferences by the local Labour Parties on the basis of equal rights for Communists and Left-Wingers must be intensified. *If, in spite of the workers' desire for such conferences, the Labour Party machine refuses to convene them or does not allow Communists and Left-Wingers to participate in them, the Party must co-operate with the Left-Wing workers in organising unofficial Selection Conferences. In those cases where the bureaucracy imposes its conditions upon the Selection Conferences it will be the duty of the Communist Party to organise the Left-Wing elements of those conferences to put forward candidates with their help against the official candidates imposed by the bureaucracy."*

These sections of the Ninth Plenum resolution are of the utmost importance, particularly in those districts where the Party has yet to prepare the ground for coming out in electoral opposition to the Labour Party. The resolution indicates the necessity of preparing for our coming out electorally by a detailed day-to-day fight inside the union branches, and through the instrumentality of the Left-Wing workers in the Labour Party ward sections to break these bodies away from the local reformist machine, and on the basis of unofficial conferences go forward with Communist or Left Wing candidates against the nominees of the bureaucracy. This approach implies the correct approach to the workers in the unions, a close connection between the Party and left elements in the Labour Party, in order that the Party can mobilise behind it in its fight all the workers who are beginning to fight against the bureaucracy. Viewed in this light, the advocacy of non-payment of the political levy and the liquidation of the Left-Wing is seen to be advocacy of the liquidation of the Ninth Plenum resolution and its replacement by a helpless, hopeless sectarian policy.

It is clear that the Ninth Plenum resolution laid exceptional stress on the political and structural changes in the Labour Party, and we must do our utmost to bring the meaning of those changes in a practical way before the great mass of the workers who are still voting for the Labour Party. It is true that the resolution linked up those changes within the Labour Party with changes in the general political situation in Great Britain and internationally. It is true that the necessity to sharpen the fight against the social-democracy because of its foul, corrupt bourgeois character is one

imposed on our comrades in other countries no less than ourselves. But the change in the political situation in Great Britain, the change in the British Labour Party is part of the changed situation internationally. If those political and structural changes within the British Labour Party had not taken place, we would have sharpened our attack on the bureaucracy, but our methods of doing so would have been different. One of our most important tasks, therefore, is to bring out clearly to the workers still attached to the Labour Party the political and structural changes which have taken place in that body, the political meaning of those changes and the justification of the new line of our Party.

The Third Capitalist Party

The merit of the Ninth Plenum resolution is that it starts from the basis of an analysis of the concrete situation existing in Britain and not from the basis of any single formula. The formula "the Labour Party is a third capitalist Party" can at best indicate our general aim with regard to the Labour Party, *i.e.*, the destruction of its influence over the workers as a means to its complete liquidation as a counter-revolutionary organisation, but the actual tactics which we have to adopt in order to realise this aim depends, not on logical deductions (or what we think are logical deductions) from this formula, but on an analysis of the concrete situation.

The German Social-Democratic Party, no less than the British Labour Party, is a bourgeois Labour Party. From the point of view of our general aim it is important to realise their similarity from the point of view of our tactical line, it is important to recognise the differences (mainly structural) between the two bourgeois Labour Parties. In Germany, as in Britain, the reformist bloc of social-democratic politicians and trade union leaders holds the trade unions in dictatorship. In Germany, however, the dictatorship of the S.D.P. is that of a political party organisationally separate from the unions, maintaining its dictatorship by its still strong influence over the members and its fractional control of the apparatus. If you go into a trade union branch in Britain, however, you will find that branch discussing a trade grievance at one moment and the next moment discussing the nomination of one of its members as Labour nominee for the local council (within the limits imposed by the Labour Party). The same branch is at one and the same time a local unit of a national trade union and of a local Labour Party. It would be wrong to describe this peculiar Labour Party structure as a federal structure because the union branch can only move constitutionally within a

social-democratic framework at successive Labour Party conferences, created by the bloc of reformist politicians and trade union manipulators of bloc votes. The dictatorship is as real as in Germany. Nevertheless, there is a difference inasmuch as the trade union branch and national union is not ruled by an organisationally separate political party, but is fused locally and nationally with the social-democratic framework, controlled by a bureaucratic national conference, the whole complicated structure appearing as the Labour Party, and drawing strength from the deep trade union traditions of the British workers by posing "as the political expression of the trade union movement" at the very moment when the Birmingham resolutions prevent any political trade union expression not in harmony with the preconceptions of the bureaucracy.

Smash the Labour Party—How?

This difference of structure does not alter our aims with regard to the Labour Party as compared with a Social-Democratic Party of the classical type, but it does call for different methods of attack, having for their object the breaking of the trade unions away from the political framework of reformist dictatorship and the bringing of them under the influence of this Party. In Germany we would unhesitatingly split the local branch of the Social-Democratic Party, but in Britain we do not split the trade union branch or the national union because it is a unit of the Labour Party, but, on the contrary, endeavour to win it away from the Labour Party. The main question in connection with the payment of the political levy is whether payment or non-payment gives us the best possible basis for beginning the fight. The question of the political levy must be discussed, not only in relation to the constituencies we are contesting, but in relation to our entire struggle to free the unions from reformism. The question of the political levy is emphatically not a question to be discussed on the basis of short-sighted electoral expediency, but in relation to breaking the unions away from the Labour Party dictatorship, thus enabling us to come out on a wide electoral front.

We must start our discussion of the political levy from the fact that trade union political funds exist (the Labour Party claiming to control their disposal), and that the unions are in the habit of putting forward their members as candidates (within the limits prescribed by the Labour Party).

The Political Levy

We can see five possible attitudes towards the political fund:

(1) That we oppose the payment of a political levy entirely. This is the attitude of non-political unionism which opposes the unions as such interesting themselves in electoral questions. The Communist supporters of this proposal aim a terrific blow at the Labour Party, miss it and hit the trade unions below the belt. The only result of the vigorous application of this tactic will be to knit the unions closer to the framework of the Labour Party. It must not be forgotten that the Liberals and Tories have given up all hope of winning the mass of trade unionists to their standpoint. A similar pessimism lies at the root of the advocacy of this proposal in our Party.

(2) That the trade unions shall have a political fund and shall run candidates at elections, and send delegates to the local and national bodies of the Labour Party, but the political character of the candidates and delegates, and therefore the disposal of the fund, shall be controlled by the Labour Party bureaucracy. This is the Labour Party's attitude.

(3) The trade unions shall have a political fund, but shall subscribe it to the funds of the Communist Party without having the right to determine who the candidates shall be or without having the right to put forward non-Communist trade union candidates. This is simply the Labour bureaucracy attitude of dictatorship wearing a Communist cloak. The comrades who put forward this proposal imagine the trade union members to be class-conscious Communists, whereas in the overwhelming majority of cases they are either loyal supporters of the Labour Party or, if suspicious of the bureaucracy, not yet ready for an electoral break from the Labour Party. This proposal is calculated to make the latter section a damned sight more suspicious of the Communist Party than they are of the bureaucracy.

(4) That we cease paying into the union political fund and advocate the creation of a branch fund that can be utilised by the branch in financing whatever candidates it pleases. This proposal in effect means creating a break-away fund to which the Communists and Left-Wingers subscribe, while the mass of levy-paying members continue to subscribe to the existing official fund. As a means of separating the Communists from their fellow trade unionists, the proposal is an excellent one. It should win the approval of the bureaucracy. It has no other merit that we can discover.

(5) The Party Executive's proposal is that we fight to transform the present fund from a fund whose disposal is controlled by the Labour Party bureaucracy into a fund whose disposal is controlled by the union membership, that 50 per cent. of this fund be retained locally, that Communist trade unionists shall have equal rights with other trade unionists in running as candidates backed by this fund. This proposal identifies the interest of the average trade unionist with the interests of our Party, and affords a platform for the development of our fight to induce branches to take immediate local control of the levy and to fight for disaffiliation of the unions from the Labour Party.

Why We Fight Birmingham

The fight against the Birmingham resolutions is the unavoidable starting point of this struggle—a starting point not chosen arbitrarily by us, but determined by the previous development of the struggle between our Party and the Labour Party bureaucracy. If the anti-political levyers had had their way we would have proudly withdrawn from such trade councils as we possess a foothold in after Birmingham, advising Left-Wingers to do the same. We should have announced that Communists who went to a ballot of the union members last year as delegates to the Labour Party will never do it again. We would have called such union branches as are under our influence to have no further connection with the Labour Party, in short, we would have laid down our arms exactly in the manner that the bureaucracy desired. The Party E.C.'s policy is the opposite. In every trades council we fight to mobilise the delegates against Birmingham. In every union branch we do the same. In every union our members who pay the political levy insist, while the union remains affiliated to the Labour Party, on having our full rights to represent the union on the basis of the policy on which we are elected to Labour Party Conferences. We start the fight on this basis, and as it develops transform it into a fight to free the union from the bourgeois Labour Party strait-jacket. Those simple and straightforward Communist tactics have been represented as fearsome and complicated. They are not half so fearsome, complicated, strange or wonderful as the tactics of retreating helter-skelter before the bureaucracy, all the time roaring threats over our shoulder as to the desperate things which we will do if once we decide to stand and fight.

The Left-Wing

Like the question of the political levy, that of the Left-Wing will be simplified if we refer to the Ninth Plenum resolution. On the basis of that resolution our Party must "adopt clearer and sharper tactics of opposition to the Labour Party and the trade union leaders in order to arouse the Left workers for the struggle against the bureaucracy as a means towards winning the leadership of the working class in the class struggle against capitalism." It is obvious that the struggle of the Left workers against the bureaucracy will take many forms. In some cases it will take the form of direct electoral support to our Party. In other cases it will take the form of left-wing struggle within the Labour Party which will ultimately lead the Left workers out of the Labour Party. The Party has to maintain contact with all genuine Left-Wing struggles of the masses "directed against the theory and the practice of the reformist organisations." A reading of the Ninth Plenum resolution should dispose of the idea that because our Party is in opposition to the Labour Party we are no longer interested in stimulating the workers inside the Labour Party to fight the bureaucracy. On the contrary, we must encourage the development of such fights to the point of electoral opposition to the reactionary nominees of the bureaucracy.

Because the Labour Party is a Social-Democratic Party, because no Left-Wing activity within it can transform it into an effective instrument of the workers' struggle, it does not follow that no further differentiation can take place within the Labour Party or that the stimulation of that differentiation is no concern of ours. On the contrary, the vigorous application of our independent electoral policy is calculated to stimulate that differentiation to a greater extent and imposes on us the necessity of maintaining close contact with the Left-Wing Labour Party workers, destroying the influence of pseudo-Left leaders over them and developing our own.

If once the certainty of differentiation within the Labour Party becomes admitted the opposition to Communists remaining associated with the National Left-Wing Movement becomes strangely unreal and amounts to no more than the suggestion that the present movement, the product of Left-Wing struggles within the Labour Party in 1926, 1927 and 1928, should be smashed and replaced at a later date by a new Left-Wing grouping whose organisational outlines have been evolved out of the inner consciousness of comrades who object to the present National Left-

Wing. It is obvious that the present loose grouping around the National Left-Wing Movement is sufficiently flexible to be adapted to the circumstances of the future without the need for the policy of smash and rebuild. This position is really the last ditch of those comrades who started out from the assumption that a Left-Wing was no longer necessary on the basis of the new policy, and who have now retreated to a position that is even less tenable than their original one.

More strange is the position of those comrades who argue that while they have derived certain advantages in their district from association with Left-Wing workers in the past, that as the possibilities of fruitful association with Left-Wing workers *in their locality at this moment* are exhausted, therefore they must be exhausted in all other districts for all time, and the National Left-Wing Movement must, therefore, go out of existence. This parish pump point of view forgets the unequal rate of differentiation in the various districts and trade unions, and is more often than not the point of view of a local which is allowing the local Labour bureaucracy to push it into the position of a gibbering and ineffective sect.

Is It a Barrier?

The opposition to the continuance of the Left-Wing on the ground that it is a barrier between the Party and the masses reflects the baseless fears of certain comrades. There are two possible interpretations of this view: (1) That the masses are streaming towards the Party but that the Left-Wing, standing between the Party and the masses, is intercepting them. There is no basis in reality for this assumption. The masses are not streaming towards the Party but have to be won by ceaseless struggle. Through the National Left-Wing the Party can make contacts with that section of the masses which in the words of comrade Bukharin, "regards reformism with scepticism but has not yet come over to us," and bring them towards the Party. We would find the arguments of comrades who support this point of view more convincing if after telling us that the Left-Wing was a barrier to the Party they did not add "Anyhow, the Left-Wing does not exist."

The other argument that the Left-Wing is a barrier to the direct Party approach to the masses is staggering. It is said that Party candidates have concealed their Communism and run as Left-Wing candidates. This is a deviation not only from the new line but from the old line in which we ran as official Labour Party candidates. Here it was always Party policy that Party members

declare themselves to be such, that they fight on the Communist programme, and that the Party should issue an independent manifesto in their support. Anything less was an *opportunist deviation from the old line*. Not the Left-Wing but wrong Party tactics must bear the responsibility for this.

The idea of the poor little Communist Party being lost in the big powerful Left-Wing must amuse those comrades who know the facts. The Party is overwhelmingly more powerful than the Left-Wing, and while it co-operates with Left-Wing workers within a limited sphere for limited purposes, this cannot, and does not, prevent or do away with the necessity for a Party approach to the workers on all the leading questions of the day.

Then there is the position of those comrades who recognise that differentiation within the Labour Party is bound to increase, but who say local united fronts with Left-Wing Labour Party workers for specific purposes but no continuous contacts, no continuous organisation. It is difficult to see the force of this. If we want to stimulate the fight against the bureaucracy in order to create conditions for the independent fight of the Party on a wider scale, continuous co-operation of the Party with the Left-Wing workers is desirable and possible.

Then there is the further proposition that while local Left-Wing groups should be encouraged, the work of those groups within the Labour Party on a district and national basis shall be co-ordinated not on the basis of the Left-Wing district and national committees, democratically elected by the Left-Wing groups, but shall be co-ordinated through the district and national machinery of our Party. This amounts to saying, "We are in favour of a Left-Wing provided it accepts the 100 per cent. domination of the Communist Party." No doubt some comrades are, but it is doubtful if any substantial number of Left-Wing workers would be.

The New Party Danger

The last objection to the Left-Wing is that such a body may develop into a new Centrist Party vacillating between the Communist Party and the Labour Party. Such a danger is always present in any Left-Wing development. It will be at its maximum if we rebuff the Left workers by withdrawing from the National Left-Wing, if we suggest forms of co-operation between our Party and the Left-Wing which are inacceptable to the Left-Wing workers. Then we will drive them under the influence of those who want a new party. By the correct policy of the Party E.C. we can avoid this danger.

The Ninth Plenum resolution brought about a tremendous change in our Party's attitude to the Labour Party. We have barely begun to apply this resolution except in a limited sectarian fashion, which does gross injustice to the resolution itself. Before we have really begun to apply the resolution on all fronts, before we have built up a body of experience on the basis of its applications, we are urged to scrap it in favour of the new policies evolved by certain comrades who imagine that the essence of Bolshevism consists in emptying the baby out with the bath water. The Party would blunder badly if it followed this advice. Its correct line must be to apply the Ninth Plenum resolution on all fronts. Then we shall see. Then we shall change if necessary.

Against the Liquidators

By W. TAPSELL

IT is no accident that in the December issue of "The Communist" the defenders of the line of the majority of the Central Committee of the Party (in connection with the Left-Wing) join in proposals which in their essence are for the liquidation of the Communist Party. Of the three contributors supporting the line of the Central Committee, one (Harry Pollitt) apparently deems discretion the better part of valour, and does not mention the controversy on the Left-Wing, whilst the others (A. E. Scriven and G. Cohen) come out for the formation of a new working-class party, indicating, therefore that the Communist Party itself is incapable of leading the masses satisfactorily.

This is no accident, for the viewpoint brought forward by comrades Scriven and Cohen logically arises from the terms of the thesis on the tactical line in dealing with the Left-Wing (I wish to say that as regards affiliation and the political levy I support the thesis).

It is a striking feature of the thesis that while it completely revises Party policy in relation to the Labour Party with regard to affiliation of the Party, and with regard to affiliation of trade unions, *yet Party policy in regard to the Left-Wing is left completely unchanged.* This in itself is proof that the thesis on the Left-Wing is incorrect. If there is one organisation affected by the Birmingham decisions (the culmination of the social-democratic disciplining and "Liberalisation" of the Labour Party) it is the Left-Wing.

Certainly in the forthcoming General Election, and indeed in all local activities of the Labour Party, it will be the line of the Left-Wing to oppose the Labour Party, to oppose the reformist candidates, and this will inevitably bring on their devoted heads the wrath of Eccleston Square.

The General Election will, if the Left-Wing fights correctly, lead to a wholesale expulsion of Left-Wing elements from the Labour Party, our Party will then face the position of leading a Left-Wing which is not a Left-Wing inside the Labour Party, but a Left-Wing outside the Labour Party.

There is a considerable difference between the National Left-Wing Movement and organisations such as the M.M., I.C.W.P.A., L.L.X., etc. Theses are organisations which particularly concentrate their attention on some particular political sphere, and base their organisation accordingly. They are in no fashion an "alternative" to our Party—fighting on *all* fronts.

The Left-Wing, however, even now assumes all the forms and characteristics of a full-grown political party. This in itself is inevitable. The Left-Wing (increasingly outside the Labour Party, and in future inevitably so) in fighting the Labour Party perforce fights in not one particular sphere, *but in all spheres.*

In the near future it is no longer a question of Left-Wing groups working inside local Labour Parties, but of a political organisation, a political party as such outside the Labour Party, and as distinct from it as the Communist Party is itself.

Do We Need Such Another Party?

No. Not twelve months ago comrade Murphy's proposition for a new "Left-Wing" Labour Party was rejected not only by our own Party, but by the Communist International.

The proposition for a new Workers' Party is based on despair in the Communist Party, is linked up with a liquidatory attitude to the C.P. "Let's rally the workers around anything but the C.P." "Let the Communists work as a fraction in the new Party." This is liquidation, a bogey slain years ago in many sections of the C.I.

The change which has taken place in the Labour Party does not mean that we abandon our struggle in despair and disguising our Communism endeavour to rally the masses. On the contrary, it throws upon the Communist Party the necessity of developing its mass activities, particularly in the factories and in the trade unions along the line of directly mobilising the masses of workers alongside our Party.

Another workers' political party can only be the fourth party of the bourgeoisie, or the second party of the proletarian revolution.

Turn to the Communist Parties abroad. Have they ever in a developed capitalist country, with a predominating proletariat, under terms of legality, formed new political parties simply because capitalism and reformism are strong? Of course not. The line of the thesis, therefore, reaches its clearest expression when comrades Scriven and Cohen take it to a logical conclusion and propose a new Workers' Political Party.

What Should We Do?

(1) In view of the inevitable general expulsion of the Left-Wing and the undesirability of the Left-Wing developing as a new political party outside the Labour Party, we must amend our attitude to the Left-Wing and regard it henceforth as an organisation which we will use to split the largest possible mass of workers from the Labour Party into the Communist Party.

(2) Inside the Left-Wing our Party members must now commence a campaign to clarify the minds of the left-wingers on the question that there is no room for another Workers' Political Party, that the task of the moment is to rally as many workers as possible around the Left-Wing (intensive development of local Left-Wing groups), and out of the Labour Party and to the Communist Party.

(3) In view of the necessity of giving time for these preparations, and to rally left-wing workers inside and outside the Labour Party to the support of the Left-Wing, and for a split in favour of the Communist Party, we should carry this policy of a split into operation in the period of, say, six months. Such things as the organisation of a National Conference of the Left-Wing, etc., around this question will obviously need preparation.

(4) Further, in view of the necessity of giving a mass demonstration to the working class, and showing that the Labour Party is incapable of reform, we should see that the split takes place *before the General Election.*

It is essential that our Party should lead the workers not in a defensive movement, but in an offensive movement. Our Party should not, therefore, be dominated by the question "get yourself expelled," so as to rally masses of workers to agree to leave the official Labour Party.

The Differentiation in the Labour Party

Comrades will ask: What will happen to the leftward tendencies in the Labour Party? Well, what will happen to them anyway with the Left-Wing kicked out? The Communist Party, not the Left-Wing, is the alternative to the Labour Party. Our Party must develop a phase of its activities hitherto much neglected, that is, the united front work; on every issue our Party should point out the necessity of a workers' united front, and make practical proposals to the workers in the local Labour Parties.

The idea that *only* with some contact from within can we in-

fluence the leftward tendencies of hitherto reformist masses in the Labour Party is a complete fallacy.

We must make a specialised direction of Party agitation and propaganda towards the workers in the Labour Party. We must take full advantage of bringing the masses into conflict with the leadership. We will have many Maxton-Cook campaigns. Many local Maxtons. We must support these without illusion, helping in the activisation of the masses, teaching them the necessity (as we try to in the trade unions) of political action and withdrawal from the Labour Party, *i.e.*, of leaving the Labour Party, not abandoning politics, but joining the Communist Party—the only Party of the working class—the only revolutionary party.

There *is* a Right Danger

By J. T. MURPHY

WHEN the Party discussion began there were numerous complaints about the concentration of discussion on the tactical questions bound up with our policy in relation to the Labour Party and the trade unions. The discussion, however, contains an exceedingly important lesson which it would have been better for our Party if we had all learned it earlier, viz., tactical questions cannot be separated from principal questions without damage to our policy. In my opinion these differences are based upon our respective estimates of the role of our Party, the trade unions and the Labour Party and our application of the united front tactic.

Our Starting Point

The Communist Party has been defined as

> "part of the working class, namely, its most advanced, intelligent, and, therefore, most revolutionary part. . . . The Communist Party has no other interests than those of the working class. It differs from the general mass of the workers in that it takes a general view of the whole historical march of the working class, and at all turns of the road it endeavours to defend the interests, not of separate groups or professions, but of the working class as a whole. The Communist Party is the organised political lever by means of which the more advanced part of the working class leads all the proletarian and semi-proletarian mass."

This is how the Second Congress of the Communist International defined the Party. It did not say that the Party must have the mass of the workers in it before it could function as a class leader. On the contrary, it made it perfectly clear that because of its character it would be bound to be a minority. Nor did it say that a Communist Party must be of given dimensions before it asserted itself as a leader. On the contrary, it follows from the nature of the Communist Party as defined with "its interests inseparable from the interests of the working class," that whether it be four hundred or four hundred thousand strong, its job is to express the interests of the working class in contrast to all other parties. The amount of support it will attract to itself thereby depends, in the main, upon the historical stage of de-

velopment reached by the working class at any given period and the general historical conditions existing.

The smallness of our Party in Britain cannot be explained by the weakness of this or that organiser, but by a whole host of factors, most of them beyond our control. We cannot, however, postpone the independent expression and action of the Party until more favourable conditions exist or we immediately become part of the forces aiming at the liquidation of the Communist Party. This is the case even with those who argue that they can express the interests of the working class either in the name of some other organisation or without an organisation. The first becomes merely a Left-Wing of some other organisation, the second is the anarchist evolving working-class policy out of his own head and depending upon "spontaneous generation" of action and leadership.

Such being the case, the Communist must perforce start from the premise of the Communist Party as the organised expression of the interests of the working class. Our guiding policy must be that of advancing the Party and helping the workers to see in *the Party* their leader in the war for their class liberation.

About "Bridges" and "Avenues"

If the above definition and line of the Party are correct then it follows that our Party must combat every liquidationist tendency and every tendency that retards the recognition of our Party as the leading Party of the working class. That there are such tendencies in our ranks is certain. The history of the Left-Wing Movement proves this most conclusively. Here let it be said that it is not a question of the subjective estimate of the Left-Wing Movement as T. Bell appears to think in his article in "Workers' Life" of December 21st, 1928, when he writes:

> "The Left-Wing Movement has never been conceived by our Party as anything other than a bridge between the Communists and sections of workers beyond our direct contact."

Whatever comrade Bell's illusions may have been concerning bridges, we are here concerned with reality. At not a single conference of the National Left-Wing Movement have the Communists spoken in the name of the Communist Party. The Left-Wing has functioned as an *independent political force*, in which our Party members operated as a fraction of the Left-Wing having Communist views which it sought ***without identifying the Party*** to get the Left-Wing to utter in the name of the Left-Wing.

This means, and can only mean, that the role of the Communists in the Left-Wing has been reduced to that of radicalising the Left-Wing which functions as an organised *independent political force.* The "bridge" under these conditions was a "one-way bridge" of the Communists to the Left-Wing and not *vice versa.*

At each conference we are usually subjected to the most profuse explanations that the National Left-Wing Movement is not "a Communist conspiracy." If it is an avenue to the Communist Party why the profound anxiety to prove that it is not? Here is what the chairman said at the last conference:

> "We are simply a national group of socialists, and it does not matter if a comrade is linked up with the Labour Party, the I.L.P. or the Communist Party; we are waging a relentless war on capitalism, and are determined, no matter what the cost, to bring the facts and implications of the class struggle to our comrades in workshop, factory and mine. We are not a new Party. Our adherents remain fast to the organisations to which they belong."

What does this mean other than that the National Left-Wing Movement is the unifying force of the class struggle and not the Communist Party? The pivot of the situation here is not our Party, nor is there a united front of our Party (the organised expression of the class interests of the workers) with other workers, but the creation of a new organ parallel with the Communist Party. This could be supplemented by a mass of evidence from the pages of the "Sunday Worker"—Communist Party victories announced as Left-Wing victories, Communist leaders referred to as "prominent Left-Wingers," even the Communist Party Bazaar as a bazaar to raise funds for Left-Wing candidates. This is liquidationism, comrade Bell, practised by "professional Communists," and not the Communist united front tactic.

The United Front

It does not follow that sectarianism is the alternative, and it is useless for comrades to sling this term about so freely as an alternative to intelligent argument. I do not propose sectarianism but the direct approach of the Party to the workers in the factories, the streets, the trade unions and local Labour organisations, with proposals for the formation of a united front *with the Party* on specific questions and not the organisation of a parallel party organisation with a duplicate Communist programme under the Left-Wing label. The organisation of forces on the basis of a complete programme means the organisation of a party. There

cannot be two Communist Parties, not even if one is labelled Left-Wing. This should be clear to every Communist.

The organisation of a united front on specific questions, on wage questions, hours of labour, democratic rights, etc., as occasion demands, is not "sectarianism," comrade Campbell, nor "running helter-skelter from the enemy," but a working alliance with non-Communists on the initiative of the Communist Party, which reveals the Party as the only organisation with a programme of the class struggle, and therefore attracts the workers to the Party.

The question of "permanency of united front organisations" must be determined by a variety of factors, but mainly the character of the task which is undertaken. For example, the I.C.W.P.A. undertakes a definite piece of work, viz., the uniting of forces for the defence of the workers, who in the class war have come under the heavy lash of the capitalist law. But it does not attempt to evolve a more or less complete political programme as in the case of the National Left-Wing. It, therefore, throws into sharp relief the limitations of a united front movement as compared with the Communist Party. It is only then that these movements function as bridges to the Party.

About the "Alternative" Party

When comrade Bell says "The danger lies in seeing the Left-Wing Movement as a Party and seeking to make it such—a socialist Labour Party, or a workers' political federation, etc.," he is simply beating the air like a blind man. The fact of the matter is that the Left-Wing functions as a parallel party. This is an incontestable fact. After the Aberdeen bye-election the E.C. of the Party confirmed the action of the Left-Wing as an independent organisation, whilst the proposals associated with the "workers' political federation, etc.," were proposals for the liquidation of the present Left-Wing, and the alternative organisation of sympathetic forces expelled from the Labour Party *around our Party and under the leadership of our Party*. Bell and others have fastened on to the labels, placed them on a parallel party of their own making, and then thrown their bricks at it without in any way attempting to analyse the content of the real proposals.

The new Labour Party I proposed was "a Labour Party as it used to be" when Lenin described it as "not a party in the real sense of the word," which should be under the leadership of the Communist Party. The "Workers' Political Federation" was only another name for the same thing. In no case was there the proposal for these bodies to have a parallel programme to that of the

Communist Party. On the contrary, I emphasised the necessity of these organisations endorsing the C.P. candidates and programme rather than the course which is so frequently adopted to-day wherein the Communist is the candidate of these organisations rather than the candidate of our Party.

This was not subordinating the Communist Party but advancing it as the leading party with loosely organised forces around it and supporting it. Comrade Bell has thus simply created a dummy, labelled it "Socialist Labour Party" or "Workers' Political Federation" and proceeded to knock it down whilst in practice he has supported a liquidationist policy. He may deny it. Others who support him may deny it. But anyone who supports a parallel organisation to that of our Party, under whatever label and however Communist its programme, and is afraid of the accusation of "Communist Party domination," is a liquidationist. If the programme of the National Left-Wing Movement is "identical with mine" (see Ferguson in the "Sunday Worker") then one or the other is redundant. This should be obvious to the most elementary schoolboy in politics. And this is the situation with which we have to deal.

The New Situation

Why, then, it will be asked, did I withdraw my proposals? Because it became obvious in the discussion in our Executive and the delegation to the World Congress that the proposals were acting as a lightning conductor and diverting attention from the real danger to an illusory one, viz., the misapplication of the united front tactic in relation to the National Left-Wing Movement. Since then important developments have taken place, not the least of which is the Birmingham Conference of the Labour Party. This conference, with its imposition of a single programme and a single "loyalty" upon its constituents, brought us and everybody else face to face with a new situation, imposing new conditions of struggle and new tasks for our Party.

First, with regard to the National Left-Wing Movement it has shown that such does not exist within the National Labour Party, and what is more, cannot exist within the Labour Party. There is no room within it for a rival programme and organisation based upon it. The fate of the I.L.P. should be sufficient evidence of the fact. To think that a Communist programme passing under the title of a Left-Wing programme can exist within the Labour Party and be the basis of an organisation within it is to blind ourselves to reality. The theory advanced in the World Congress delegation discussion, that the Left-Wing

is to provide the alternative leadership to MacDonald in the Labour Party, just as the M.M. provides the alternative in the trade unions, is entirely without foundation in the realm of reality. There can be no rival programme in the Labour Party and no rival organisation based upon it. Therefore, no National Left-Wing programme and organisation as one knows it within the Labour Party.

Does this mean there can be no further differentiation in the Labour Party, no leftward tendencies? No, it does not mean anything of the kind, and comrade Campbell is simply refusing to see the wood for the trees and misrepresenting his opponents when he lumps together the question of the National Left-Wing Movement and the united front tactic in relation to the differentiation development in the Labour Party. The National Left-Wing Movement is a definite independent organisation, with its own programme outside the Labour Party with as little possibility as the Communist Party of getting into the Labour Party with it.

What is the National Left-Wing Movement under these circumstances but a centrist party? He wants this organisation to continue in order to harness the differentiation process in the Labour Party later on (see his article in current number). He wants it also to initiate the differentiation in the Labour Party. So also does the editor of the "Workers' Life" (see December 21st, 1928, issue). Why these tasks should be relegated to some other organisation than our Party is unknown. Yet he writes: "The masses are not streaming towards the Party but have to be won by ceaseless struggle. Through the National Left-Wing the Party can make contacts with that section of the masses which, in the words of comrade Bukharin, 'regards reformism with scepticism, but has not yet come over to us,' and bring them towards the Party." Why the National Left-Wing is needed for our Party to make contact with those who "regard reformism with scepticism" passes comprehension. If this is required for these enlightened workers what shall we need to reach the most backward masses? This, comrade Campbell, is downright liquidationism and complete lack of faith in the Party to do the most elementary of its tasks.

The Need for Independence

The correct line of Communist policy, in addition to the propaganda of our programme, etc., is the ***independent Communist Party*** approach to the rank and file of the Labour Party, trade unions, I.L.P., etc., on immediate issues of the day with proposals for united action. The response to our approach and

the character of the action undertaken determine the form of the united front organisation it may be necessary to create and its duration. For example, the International Women's Day Committees were united front organisations led by our Party, fulfilling their task admirably, attracting women to our Party, but they were never allowed to develop a parallel programme to the Party.

But, says comrade Campbell, we want permanent contact with Left workers. By all means let us have permanent contact. This, however, depends upon the permanence of our Party's mass activity with them and not upon the creation of national organisations for Party contact by proxy and under cover of a pseudo- Communist organisation.

"But," interjects comrade Campbell once more, "Left-Wing workers won't have 100 per cent. domination of our Party." What does Campbell mean by this? If he means that Left workers who form a united front with our Party shall not have the right to freely elect their representatives to any united front committee, local or national, then nobody is suggesting such a course. If he means that the Left worker needs an intermediary body such as the National Left-Wing organisation then he is back again on the liquidationist track.

The Difference Between the N.M.M. and the N.L.W.

Then in rushes comrade Strain to the rescue, impatient of arguments and forgetful of the fact that a year ago he was a very conservative member of a majority that was in the wrong, and assures us that the N.M.M. is a national organisation and has a national programme. If a M.M. with a programme, why not a National Left-Wing with a programme? Is there, then, no difference between a trade union and a party, no difference between a trade union minority and a parallel party? Is it possible to set before the workers of the Labour Party the same means of attack upon the bureaucracy as in the trade unions? First, the Communists are not in the Labour Party but they are in the trade unions. The members of the M.M. are in the trade unions but the members of the National Left-Wing Movement are not in the Labour Party. The programme of the National Left-Wing is a parallel programme with that of the Communist Party. The programme of the M.M. is essentially a programme of immediate demands, upon which Communists and non-Communists unite together in the M.M. for common action within the trade unions. But even here within the M.M. is a strong tendency to regard it as an alternative to the C.P. and a definite reluctance of the Party members within

it to identify the Communist Party. There are many who whilst prepared to let themselves be known as Communists are terribly anxious that the role of the Party and its open alliance with non-Party workers in the unions shall be obscured.

Nevertheless, the difference between the position of the M.M. and the N.L.W. is obvious. The one has a basis in the trade unions for a working alliance of our Party and non-Party workers. The National Left-Wing has no basis in the Labour Party, and cannot have a basis. The C.P. is not in the Labour Party, and is the enemy of that Party, whilst not being an enemy of the trade unions. There is, therefore, neither a basis for a National Left-Wing organisation nor a Communist Party within the Labour Party. We are forced by the nature of the changes that have taken place in the Labour Party to completely change our line of approach to the Labour Party. We are compelled to attack it from outside, and to win the workers away from it. A totally different proposition to our task in relation to the unions. Comrade Strain fails completely to appreciate the difference between a trade union and a party, and seeks to reduce politics to trade union parliamentarism. He can see nothing but his A.S.W. rule book. But if he would read his own quotations carefully he would see that my argument about our position is correct. His argument consists of a fight for trade union parliamentarism. In this he is not alone. We have all been tarred with this brush more or less in our time. This is perfectly clear in the letters and articles on the political levy.

The tactical thesis and every supporter of it approach the payment of the political levy, and the affiliation of the unions to the Labour Party, entirely from the premise of trade union parliamentarism. Comrade Campbell says, "We must start our discussion of the political levy from the fact that trade union political funds exist (the Labour Party claiming to control their disposal), and that the unions are in the habit of putting forward their members (within limits prescribed by the Labour Party)."

The New Stage

This is the common basis of approach to the question by every supporter of the C.C. thesis. The whole question of the role of our Party as the leading Party is here completely eclipsed. It fails both to advance *the Party* as the leader and totally fails to appreciate the completeness of the changes that have taken place within the Labour movement. The one outstanding feature of the new situation, brought to its consummation by the Birmingham

Conference decisions, is the fact that the British working class have passed completely into party politics. The fight is no longer the fight to attract the workers to politics but a fight as to which party they will support and join—the Labour or the Communist Party. This is an entirely new stage towards which all previous developments were pointing. To confine ourselves to old forms of struggle when these forms have outlived themselves is simply to be guilty of "right sectarianism."

From the end of the Chartist movement to the end of the last century the workers of Britain were entirely under the political domination of the bourgeois parties. There were no workers' parties—only small groups of socialists. This was the reason of the pioneer efforts to break the allegiance of the workers from the Liberals and Tories that the Labour Representation Committee was set up in 1900. Unable to get a party following the pioneers started with trade union politics. There was no party programme, only the question of separation from the Party control of the Liberals and Tories. By 1906 the title of Labour Representation Committee was dropped and the Labour Party name taken on. The progress in a few years was phenomenal. They were phenomenal years of mass strikes and war. But it was not until 1918 that a programme emerged called "Labour and the New Social Order." Coincident with this an individual membership section was established facilitating the inflow of the middle classes. Thus the party character of the movement got into its stride, but as yet the discipline was loose, the federal character of the Labour Party still maintained.

The rise of the Communist Party in 1920 and its demand for affiliation to the Labour Party, raised sharply the question of the kind of politics which were to dominate the Labour Party. The Edinburgh Conference of 1922 began the purge of the Communists and revolutionary doctrine from the Labour Party; 1923 saw the affirmation of "gradualism" as the dominant politic. The Labour Government raised still more *the Party* question. 1925 brought the Liverpool Conference decisions, eliminating Communists as individual members, etc., and beginning the attack in the unions as the next step to the subordination of the unions to the Labour Party. The General Strike carried the Labour Party still further. The political issue of the General Strike, *i.e.*, the raising of the question of the conquest of power, consolidated the Labour Party and the trade union bureaucracy against the revolution, awakened their party consciousness to its maximum for the drive against the Communists.

This consolidation was followed with the Trade Union Act, which deprived the unions of collective affiliation to the Labour Party, established individual contracting in, and carried the Labour Party still one big stage further towards a consolidated individual membership party. It had yet to settle with the I.L.P. and the loopholes in the trade unions left in the Liverpool resolutions. Birmingham completed the business. It produced a single programme and enforced a single loyalty. From this neither the I.L.P. nor we can escape. The I.L.P. is defunct and decomposing. None of its leaders had the guts to challenge the process to the point of breaking with the Labour Party. The trade unions in relation to politics (parliamentary) have been completely subordinated to the Labour Party, and the collection of the political levy is nothing more nor less than the collection of dues for the Labour Party—through the trade union apparatus.

The Executive's Wrong Answer

What have comrade Campbell and the E.C.'s resolution to answer to this situation? Do they recognise that the fight has shifted on to a higher plane, that it is now a fight between parties for the allegiance of the workers to one or other party and not the old question of a trade union parliamentarism? No. This is not recognised. They answer the new situation not by confronting the workers in the trade unions with the Independent Communist Party, the rival and enemy of the Labour Party, but by reverting back to trade union parliamentarism in which centrism predominates. They plead not for a policy of open support of the unions to our Party as part of our independent fight against the Labour Party, but for a formal trade union opposition. They plead for a ballot vote to disaffiliate when everybody knows that contracting in is the trade union means of membership of the Labour Party, and any voting would be limited to those who contract in governed by acceptance of the Birmingham loyalty decision, *i.e.*, they ask for a vote of the Labour Party to liquidate itself. They plead for changing the constitution of the unions to permit a fifty-fifty division of the dues of the Labour Party in the unions between the locals and the E.C.'s, although everyone knows that locally and nationally expenditure is governed by loyalty to the Labour Party. They plead for the trade unions to elect their own candidates free from the Labour Party, and to give the Communist members a democratic chance to be elected.

If this is not running "helter-skelter" from the fight of *the Party* in the unions and answering only with trade union parlia-

mentarism of a more or less pink variety, a demand to revert back to pre-Party times, it would be interesting to know what is. We are asked what would we do if we captured a union? When the Communist Party captures a union there is not the least doubt that we can ask that union to directly support the Communist Party.

But comrade Campbell says, and the resolution says, that if we advance the Party claim as against the trade union claim then we "shall be objectively supporting the Baldwin Government and its Act of 1927," by depriving the unions of their participation in politics. This is so like the Labour Party argument that I wonder why they do not go back completely to the old line and reject the new policy entirely by withdrawing our candidates who are opposing the Labour Party, for if this is to pass for a Communist estimate of the situation, are we not objectively supporting Baldwin in the elections?

It is quite evident that our comrades have got swallowed up in trade union parliamentarism, and on various grounds we are advised to do anything but advance the Party to the foreground of events. It is very good that we Communists should prove to be the best trade unionists, but it is bad when we are to be nothing more, when trade unionism supersedes the role of the Party. How can the Party ever be looked upon as the alternative party to the Labour Party if by one means or another we push the Party into the background?

The Answer of the Opposition!

The battle in the unions is now a battle between *parties* for trade union support, and not that of reversion to trade union parliamentarism. This must be the main line of our fight which can only be effectively waged by advancing our Party to the front of the battle, which involves: (1) dropping the affiliation tactic; (2) fighting for the disaffiliation of the unions, locally and nationally, from the Labour Party; (3) non-payment of the political levy, the payment of which is equivalent to membership of the Labour Party; (4) direct recruiting to the Party, financial and moral support of the unions and their members to the Communist Party; (5) united front of our Party with unions or locals which revolt against the Labour Party; (6) affiliation of the unions and branches to the M.M., led by the C.P.; (7) formation of Communist workers' electoral committees in elections for support of Communist Party candidates.

This is neither "helpless, hopeless sectarianism," nor liquida-

tionism, but the advance of the Communist Party as an independent party, leading the workers to the revolutionary workers' government, through the operation of the united front of our Party *from below,* conducting a battle on two fronts against the Tories and Liberals on the one hand and the Labour Party on the other. It means the end of liquidatory policies in our Party, a recognition of the new period now begun in the history of the working class of this country, and the ascendancy of our Party to a consciousness of its role as the leader of the class battles of the workers.

The Right Danger—a Reply

By E. CHASE

IN his article in the November issue of the "Communist," J. T. Murphy gives a very good, but also a very contradictory, treatise on this question which I think has been troubling quite a good number of our Party members, more especially the question of the political levy and the trade unions. In his article Murphy points out his view in one paragraph, and in the next he answers his own question opposite to the view he is trying to expound, which is not only contradictory but very confusing. For instance, he states that this question is not a doctrinaire or sectarian question, and at the same time, under the sub-heading, "What of the Political Levy?" he advocates the non-payment of the political levy in the unions by Party members when at this stage of the situation any comrade who attends his branch regularly knows that not to pay the political levy would at once leave us outside of the branch just on our own, simply and purely as a sect. Furthermore, I suggest that it is the task of the Party comrades to get to work in the branches and when the time comes that we have to leave the branches (we know it has to come after Birmingham) then by the work we have done in them we can prove to the workers that it is not we who are the disrupters, but the trade union bureaucrats, and so win the workers over to us away from the bureaucrats. Then we could get on with the job of Red trade unions. This, I think, is what comrade Murphy is hinting at when he suggests that the trade unions combine locally and affiliate to the N.M.M. But until this is achieved, and the M.M. groups are strong enough, it is against M.M. policy to advocate other unions since at present the workers are as yet for some unexplainable reason still afraid of the M.M. and the Party.

Murphy states that payment of the political levy gives no political rights. This, I think, is where he is wrong, because without payment of the political levy what rights we have got would be taken from us by the very people we are trying to win over to ourselves. By this I mean that there are still comrades who are being appointed as delegates from their branches to local Labour Parties, and are able to put in good Party work

there, even after Liverpool and Birmingham. I know Murphy will answer that he knows of a person who was so appointed as delegate to his local Labour Party and did not pay his political levy. But I should like to point out to comrade Murphy that that may be so in an individual case, but let the Party give instructions to its members to abstain from paying the political levy and it would be noised abroad the whole length and breadth of the land. Then where would our members be? What would the work our comrades have been doing in the branches have accomplished?

Lenin once said that "the only way we can Bolshevise the masses is at its highest point of organisation," which is obviously the Labour Party and the trade unions. While we have still a foothold in these it is our place to keep there. Assuming Murphy is right in suggesting that the trade unions are not political, while we are in them we can expound our political views in them, but I cannot see how Murphy makes out the trade unions are not political after reading his pamphlet on "The Political Meaning of the Great Strike." We hope to make them political.

On the question of the National Left-Wing Movement I agree with Murphy that this organisation has served its purpose and is now becoming a danger to the Party, and as such should be liquidated as soon as possible by some means or other.

Finally, I don't understand Murphy's point in stating that our Party members are not quite sure when they should be recruiting for the Left-Wing and when for the Party. Obviously it must be the Party first. I am afraid comrade Murphy, as a trade unionist, has forgotten a lot of the practical side of trade union work, and is leaning more to the parliamentary side of the situation. In conclusion I think the Party has a danger of a fanatical character of a few of its members. If the revolution was taking place next week, or even next year, I think comrade Murphy's views would be in quite good order but not with the situation as it is to-day.

The Danger of Obsolete Slogans

By M. FERGUSON (Wigan)

THE forthcoming Annual Congress of our Party will be confronted with the task of reviewing not only our policy but also our slogans. The former cannot be separated from the latter, for slogans are rallying cries which must reflect policy.

Take, for example, the slogan of "a Labour Government controlled by the E.C. of the Labour Party" which was formulated at the Manchester Party Congress in 1927.

Was it not in this incorrect slogan that the Comintern saw reflected our incorrect policy? This has since been made clear. Take again the slogan of "Make the Leaders Fight." Was this not a reflection of our old line in the trade unions which our Party Congress must correct? Obviously it was.

If incorrect slogans are incompatable with a correct policy, how can comrades justify the curious anomaly of supporting the policy formulated at the February Plenum, while at the same time adhering to slogans issued on the basis of the old line when we estimated the situation and our tasks fundamentally differently from now?

The latest example of this anomaly was supplied by comrade Leckie in the December issue of "The Communist," in which he advances as one of the slogans the Party should concentrate upon, that of "Nationalisation with Workers' Control."

This slogan is still used by some of our propagandists, occasionally creeps into our press, and has not officially been discarded by our Party in Britain.

I remember how at the Sixth World Congress the German Party was severely rebuked for issuing this slogan instead of carrying out the decisions of the last Congress of the R.I.L.U. I further recollect how this led to a discussion in the Congress hall between Rust and myself as to the use of this slogan by the British Party. We were both of the opinion that the slogan is obsolete and should be abandoned by our Party.

Why did we reach this conclusion?

I will speak in the singular so as not to involve comrade Rust in this article more than in the passing reference made above.

About Nationalisation with Workers' Control

The first question we must ask ourselves is, "Is 'nationalisation' a revolutionary slogan?"

It is not, for even a Fascist Government could logically nationalise railways and fuel in the interests of the bourgeoisie as a whole and of its State.

The second question we can formulate as follows: "Does the addition of the words 'with workers' control' transform this radical bourgeois slogan into a revolutionary one?"

In my opinion it does not. It transforms it into a "Left" social-democratic slogan. I will put a third question. Is workers' control of industry attainable without the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship? It is not. Then we can draw no other conclusion but that the slogan of "A Revolutionary Workers' Government" must replace that of "Nationalisation with Workers' Control," which perpetuates the illusion of the possibility of workers' control within capitalism.

It is the Citrines who now hold out the perspective of increasing workers' control of industry through Mondism.

Do they not present Mondism as the recognition by the employers of the constructive role of modern trade unionism and the right of the workers, acting through their representatives, to an increasing share in the management of industry—and so on and so forth on lines familiar to us all?

I wish to anticipate here an argument which defenders of the "Workers' Control" slogan may advance. It runs as follows: "The slogan is a correct one if we make it clear in our propaganda that we mean workers' control of industry *after* the overthrow of the bourgeoisie."

If this can be accepted then we can support "rationalisation" if we make it clear we mean rationalisation carried out by a Workers' Government after the overthrow of capitalism.

To be logical we should continue to support the slogan of "More Power to the General Council" so long as we made it clear we meant after the defeat of the bureaucracy and the establishment of a General Council of revolutionaries.

We could even support the slogan of "Down with the Baldwin Government" if we made it clear we did not advocate a Labour Government as the alternative. Such reasoning is

absurd. With such logic one can justify anything—even capitulation to capitalism and the bureaucracy. All these slogans belong to the past. To-day they are reactionary, and the very antithesis of the Ninth Plenum Resolution. The Annual Congress of our Party will be entrusted with the task of abandoning obsolete slogans and formulating new ones to reflect our policy of to-day.

New Slogans are Wanted

While we shall be faced with issuing, as occasion demands, transitory slogans, *i.e.*, slogans of action, the central slogan to come forth from our Congress must be that of "A Revolutionary Workers' Government."

Parallel with this our Party must issue the slogan of "Fight for the Masses."

This slogan demands a struggle to win the workers under the ideological and organisational influence of the reformists by working in the organisations of the latter as well as outside; demands an approach to the masses in every phase of working-class life regardless of industry or organisation; demands the independent role of the Party and the united front from below; demands that we care for the everyday needs of the masses; that we continue to work in the trade unions on lines dictated neither by the provocative conduct of the bureaucracy nor by capitulatory tendencies in our own ranks; that we shrink neither from splits nor the formation of new unions when the occasion demands; that we develop our units in industrial concerns and take direct leadership of strike struggles which the reformist endeavour to prevent or betray; that we link up economic issues with the struggle against Mondism and the Trade Union Act, and connect the latter with the preparations for war on the part of capitalism.

With the struggle against the war danger as our central task to which all else must be subordinated, though linked up, the Tenth Congress must issue the call for a "Fight for the Masses" under the central slogan of a "Revolutionary Workers' Government."

Only then shall we be able to approach our tasks in the light of the Ninth Plenum Resolution and the decisions of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International.

Thesis on Work Among Women

The attacks of British capitalism upon the working class fall with particular severity upon working women.

The period of the decline of Britain's basic industries has been marked by the progressive development of secondary and luxury trades employing ever greater numbers of women and young girls.

The displacement of workers in these declining basic industries has, therefore, not been followed by their absorption into the new industries. The consequent larger army of unemployed has caused women to be faced with a newer and more bitter aspect of their every-day struggles. Their usual problem of catering for and keeping husband and family with some small standard of comfort has become a problem insuperable under capitalism.

Rationalisation, capitalism's new device for averting its collapse, means improved machinery and methods of working, a tightening up of organisation, a keener demand for efficiency, longer hours and cheaper labour.

The need for cheap labour leads to the substitution of women and young workers for men at lower wages, with the consequent break-up of family life and increased hardships.

Britain's necessity for markets and stabilisation drives her to take a leading part in the preparation for new wars. Thus we see a development of those new industries that are indispensable in modern warfare—chemical, aircraft—and of the potential war industries such as artificial silk, which can be rapidly converted into the manufacture of war materials.

Thousands of new women workers are being drawn into these industries every year, and the number of women employed far exceeds that of men.

The employment and terrible exploitation of more and more colonial labour, together with foreign competition for Britain's markets, results in attacks on wages and hours, and a huge army of unemployed in the industries that in the past have employed large numbers of women workers (jute and cotton textile industries).

Women's lack of trade union organisation makes them

an easy prey of capitalist rapacity. Out of the 4,000,000 who are employed in industry only one in eight is organised in a trade union. This advantage of the employers is followed up by attacks on picketing and on the right to strike. In some of the new industries non-unionism is a condition of employment and company unions are becoming more prevalent.

In spite of the development of new industries employing large numbers of women there is also an increasing burden of unemployed women, whose position is pitiable. Forced on to the labour market by increasing economic pressure at home they enter into the competitive struggle for work in factories and offices, and this increase of women workers is being accompanied by a general increased worsening of the whole working class and by increased unemployment.

The Political Situation

The Baldwin Government has acted as the leader of the capitalist class in every attack that has increased the misery of women. It has introduced legislation that is being used to smash up what fragments of organisation they possess and to prevent them fighting cuts in wages and increases in hours (Trade Union Act), it has reduced women's unemployment pay by means of the new Unemployment Act (Blanesburgh), enforced cuts in relief, and economy in social welfare work (Audit Bill), and has now by the introduction of the Local Government Bill, tightened the screw still further. The Local Government Bill is the natural sequel to the Audit Bill and the supersession of Boards of Guardians. By placing the payment of relief in the hands of County Councils and non-elected persons, and by placing further hardships on women who are compelled to use hospitals or institutions, its results will be seen in the increased suffering and starvation of women and children.

As a matter of political expediency the Baldwin Government has placed over 5,000,000 new women voters on the roll of the franchise, and is now sparing no effort to win their sympathy and support.

Through the Conservative Party it is giving its support to bourgeois women's organisations. Wealthy and influential, their organisations attempt to bribe working women into support of capitalism, and seek to prevent or break strikes.

The Labour Party throughout has made no attempt to prevent the attacks that have fallen on women. It has on the other hand used its press and its power to betray the interests of the workers.

One of its most prominent women members was signa-

tory to the Blanesburgh Report, and thus was instrumental in reducing women's unemployment pay. Communist and Left-Wing women have been thrown out of Labour Women's Sections, and in some of the hardest hit mining areas sections have been closed down wholesale.

The Labour Party has consistently supported schemes for the emigration of women and for the forcing of girls into domestic service, the worst-paid and most notorious for its evil conditions of any type of women's employment.

Just in the way in which the Labour Party and trade union leaders have collaborated with capitalism in the interests of "Industrial Peace," so also they have collaborated with bourgeois women's pacifist organisations to deceive working women into a false sense of security under capitalism.

The War Danger

As the war danger becomes more acute the position of women and their attitude towards the next war become of greater political importance.

The preponderance of women in war industries means that capitalism will be able to carry on the next war with very little dislocation of industry. Women will be in the key positions and their political outlook becomes, therefore, a matter of urgent importance for a revolutionary Party.

The hold which pacifism had upon British working women is considerably weakened, but, nevertheless, it plays a most important part. This pacifism, fostered and inculcated by the Labour Party and reformists in general, presents a grave danger to the workers in time of war.

Belief in the League of Nations and its power to prevent war under capitalism is very widespread, and prevents women organising to fight against the real cause of wars—capitalism itself.

One thing, however, is becoming evident among women, that is likely to prove a real check on the predatory designs and war plans of British imperialism. A steadily growing friendship with the workers of Soviet Russia is showing itself among British working women, and any attack on the Soviet Union would meet with strong opposition.

That this opposition would not be purely pacifist has been shown by the support given by women to the Communist Party's anti-war campaign.

As political reaction develops and the danger of war becomes more pronounced the anti-working-class character of pacifism is increasingly exposed. The "pacifism" which opposes the resistance of the working class to capitalist op-

pression enters into industrial peace conferences with the employers. The "pacifism" which sabotages the struggle of the colonial peoples against imperialist aggression supports the imperialists against the colonial peoples in China and India. The "pacifism" which opposes the Soviet disarmament proposals and slanders the U.S.S.R. in the capitalist press supports the capitalist League of Nations and the Kellogg Pact, while at the same time refusing to consider methods of war resistance. This "pacifism" which deplores working-class violence stands revealed as assistants of capitalist violence and repression against the working class and toiling masses throughout the Empire, and whose increasing exposure is drawing working women towards the Party.

Success and Weaknesses of our Work Among Women

The chief success of our work among women has been the extension of the Party's influence and leadership over tremendous numbers of non-Party women. For the first time in the history of the Party real rank-and-file united front activity has been carried on against capitalism. On two of the most important questions of the day, the capitalist offensive and the war danger, rank-and-file workers, in spite of official opposition, worked ably under the direction of the Communist Party.

The organisation of the delegation of fifty women to the U.S.S.R. was a great success, which has done much to strengthen the bonds between British and Russian workers, and has developed a wider political outlook and increased class-consciousness amongst the women of the delegation, besides spreading a knowledge of the U.S.S.R. among thousands of British women.

Our delegate conferences and United Front Committees have been successful in so far as we have got women from other organisations. But they betray the weakness that is evident in all our work as they have been unable to attract many women industrial workers.

Our methods of approach to industrial women workers have in the past been too spasmodic and more definite and sustained effort is needed. This can only be got by the setting up of definite machinery to deal with this question—preferably through the Minority Movement.

During the past year we have been able to rally housewives to our support in campaigns against the capitalist offensive and the war danger. It must, however, be admitted that

on the immediate issues which face working women in the home—housing, rates, prices, maternity and child welfare—our success has been limited. With the passing of the Local Government Bill, which directly affects working women by throwing the incidence of taxation on the workers, by curtailing relief, and by curtailment of maternity and child welfare through the operation of block grants, the Party must develop intensive work amongst working women in the home on the above questions, and in our electoral work increase the representation of working women on local government bodies. In the matter of child welfare it is essential that our department assist the Young Comrades' League in its work by appealing to parents to encourage the growth of the children's movement.

Although we have built up round our press a good number of women worker correspondents, and have during campaigns raised the circulation of the "Working Woman" considerably, we have failed to maintain a steady circulation at anything like a satisfactory level.

More attention is now given to work among women by the Party as a whole, but it still needs to be stressed that this is a Party task and not one for the women alone.

Next Tasks

The tasks, therefore, which confront the Party are as follows :—

1. To organise women in industry and unemployed women (concentrating mainly on women in textile trades and in potential and war industries), and to recruit the best elements for the Party.

2. To expose and fight pacifism and reformism and combat bourgeois women's organisations (strengthen the L.L.X.).

3. To win the support of the working women for the Party's electoral policy and programme in preparation for the General Election.

4. To train large numbers of our women to act as responsible leaders.

5. To develop rank-and-file united front activities, and make our delegate meetings and committees representative of industrial women.

6. To intensify our work among Left-Wing Labour women and in the co-operative movement.

7. To strengthen the international character of our work by establishing connections with revolutionary working women abroad, especially in the colonies.

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